

THE
FAIR CAMBRIANS.

VOL. I.



THE
FAIR CAMBRIANS.

A NOVEL.

*La Beauté de L'Esprit surpasse
Infiniment celle du corps.*

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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THE

LIBRARY



FAIR CAMBRIANS.

CHAPTER I.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PARK AND CASTLE OF
KIDWELLY, OR BEECHWOOD;

WITH CHARACTERISTIC PORTRAITS OF THE
DORVILLE FAMILY;

INCLUDING A PART OF THAT OF
MISS MARSHALL.

KIDWELLY castle, the ancient mansion of one of the most respectable families in South Wales, was finely situated on a bold swell, in one of the most beautiful vales in the county of Glamorgan. The ground of the extensive park, with

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which it was surrounded, was uncommonly various, and ornamented with a profusion of noble trees; a clear and rapid river formed its boundary in front; and a high mountain presented a back ground, grand as the warm imagination of a painter could have wished. In short, nature seemed to have taken a peculiar pleasure in bestowing on this favoured spot a rich variety of her choicest gifts. But all these advantages were rendered of little value to the possessors, by their being annexed to the most gloomy and inconvenient of all old houses. The walls, which were of an uncommon thickness, suffered but a small portion of light to pass into it through the narrow windows; and the immense hall, which was calculated to entertain the assembled inhabitants of the neighbouring country, rendered the rest of the house a confused heap of ill shaped rooms, connected by long and narrow passages.

passages. Yet this dismal habitation was held sacred, and respected, if not beloved, by succeeding generations; and might still probably have kept its station, had it not devolved to a female, and, by that means, become the property of a family who had not been taught, in early infancy, to revere its venerable gloom.

COLONEL Dorville, the only son of the heiress of Kidwelly, having always admired its noble situation, determined, whenever it came into his possession, to pull down this melancholy pile of building, and erect a handsome and convenient house in its place. He was prevented from putting this plan in execution for some years, by being engaged in the service of his country, to whose smallest interests he ever cheerfully sacrificed his own. But, on his return from America, at the conclusion of the war, he grew im-

patient to realize the scheme, on the idea of which he had so frequently feasted his imagination. He had himself a fine taste in architecture, and, with the assistance of a first rate artist, in less than two years, the cumberous load of stones which formed Kidwelly disappeared, and a spacious and elegant mansion filled its place, which, from a fine grove of ancient beech trees, that formed a beautiful and stately amphitheatre behind the building, he called Beechwood.

He was so charmed with the house, its situation, and the country round, that, remote as it was from the dissipated part of the world, he resolved to make it his principal place of abode; and, after less opposition than might reasonably have been expected from a *modern wife*, he prevailed upon his lady to remove to it, with her two daughters, from Grosvenor Square,

Square, where they had chiefly resided during his absence, on account of the education of the young ladies, which could no where be so advantageously conducted as in the capital, where all possible care had been bestowed, and no expence spared, to render them what is called perfectly accomplished. Arabella, the eldest, was thought to be so at the time of their settling in Wales; and, being just turned of seventeen, and very beautiful in her person, all the little world of her father's acquaintance wondered that he should be so absurd as to exclude her from company and public places, at the very time when she ought to have been introduced into them.

BUT Colonel Dorville's mode of thinking was very different from that of most men of fashion. He saw that his daughter was beautiful and accomplished; but his

wishes were not bounded by externals; he was ardently desirous that she should be also worthy and amiable. He wished to render her a blessing, as well as an ornament, to society; and this he thought might be more probably expected from a few years of study and retirement, than from a too early initiation into what is called life. In the country he could himself be her preceptor and companion: she would converse with those only whom she should select; read such books as he should recommend; and, above all, become acquainted, and, he hoped, enamoured, with the sublime and beautiful of nature, which would of course lead her young mind to admire, to *adore* its Divine Author.

THE Colonel had, in his youth, been remarkably warm in his temper, which was strongly tinged with romance. He had early, in life, married a lady, whose
family

family was far beneath his own, and whose fortune was below his acceptance: her lovely person, and the good sense and sweetness of disposition, which he imagined she possessed, were to him of inestimable value; and he thought himself the most fortunate of men in such an acquisition. But he was deceived; her understanding was far from strong, and capable of no higher polish than a very common education had given it; of course, all his efforts to improve her were vain. During the first ten years of their marriage, she suffered herself to be unceasingly whirled in the vortex of fashionable dissipation; but, for a longer time, her constitution, which was naturally delicate, refused to second her inclinations, and she had a fever, which nearly cost her her life. All the warmth of affection, which had, for a long time, lain dormant in the bosom of the Colonel, on this occasion, revived;

every physician of eminence, in London, was called in; and their assiduities, together with those of her husband and friends, flattered her so much, that, as she recovered, she felt herself unwilling to lose their attentions; and began to consider whether there was not something very vulgar and unfeeling in perfect health. Her fondness for public amusements being worn out by a free indulgence for so many years, besides the mortification of every now and then a newer and a younger face appearing, she resolved to give them up entirely; assume a new character, and commence fashionable invalid. It was delightful to go to Bath, to Weymouth, to Scarborough; and every where to meet the anxious enquiries of sympathizing friends; to have the seat next the fire in winter; and be consulted before a window could be thrown open in summer: to talk continually of herself, of her complaints, her
unfortunate

unfortunate nerves; to be complimented on the amazing fortitude with which she bore up under such exquisite sufferings! O, it was beyond measure soothing! She never had been of such consequence before, and resolved not to give up her title to the flattering distinctions she daily received. As the gentlemen of the faculty were consulted wherever she went, medicines of course prescribed, and a part of them taken, custom, by degrees, rendered them necessary; and, at length, she became, in reality, what she had, at first, only affected to appear.

THE Colonel had sufficient penetration to enable him to discover the source of her disorder, but possessed not the power of stopping its progress. Indeed, during his long absence, it grew to a magnitude which left him no hope of its cure. He therefore did not attempt it; but resolved

to form the minds of his daughters to those happy and rational pursuits, for which he had found it impossible to inspire a taste in their mother. Luckily a young physician, of whose abilities Mrs. Dorville had a high opinion, had settled at Cowbridge, which was within a few miles of Beechwood; and his warm recommendation of the Glamorganshire air, as the most salubrious in the island for a person of her constitution, was no small inducement to her to comply with the Colonel's earnest desire of residing there, to which she could, indeed, form but one rational objection, and that was the removal of Maria, who was four years younger than her sister, from her masters; and this was, in a great degree, obviated, by their taking with them, into Wales, Miss Marshall, an accomplished young woman, in the capacity of a governess.

BUT

BUT for a short time was this sensible and affectionate father permitted to enjoy the happiness which the pleasing employment of forming the minds of amiable and docile children must give to a fond parent. He was taken from them, by a fever, in little more than two years after he had undertaken this tender task; to their irreparable loss, and the inexpressible grief of all who had discernment enough to value, as he deserved, so excellent a man. Mrs. Dorville was not among that number: her weak nerves, her unfortunate delicacy of constitution, had, for many years, so entirely occupied her feelings, and filled her mind, that no other sorrow than they occasioned could find admission there. She, however, kept up a very decent and proper appearance of grief; and detained Dr. Green (who assured all her acquaintance that she was extremely

extremely ill) in the house during the first nine days of her widowhood.

How different were the feelings of the lovely Arabella, on whom he had doated, and who returned his affection with an enthusiastic warmth! I will not attempt to describe them; they were so exquisitely painful, as to cause no small degree of anxiety in her friends for their effects on her health; but, in the course of a few months, their apprehensions were removed—Nature, when it bestowed upon her the warmest affections, and most tender feelings, gave also a large portion of firmness, without which they degenerate into weakness, and render their possessors wretched, if not contemptible. She soon became sensible of the impropriety of indulging her grief, and, by unremitted efforts, was, at length, enabled to remove the heavy load which lay so near her heart, and,

and, by degrees, recover her usual composure. But this was scarcely effected, before a new, and unexpected, cause of trouble arose to distress her. Miss Marshall, who was the daughter of a particular friend, and brother officer of the Colonel's, had appeared, during his life, a valuable acquisition to their family, as well on account of her good disposition and principles, as the various talents and accomplishments of which she was mistress; but being rendered nearly independent in her circumstances, by the will of her generous patron, her temper, which was naturally bad, began, after his death, to display itself in no very pleasing colours. She assumed an authoritative tone even to Arabella, and tyrannized over her younger sister in the most cruel manner. Poor Maria was ill calculated to bear the restraints which she thought proper to impose upon her, and applied to her mother

ther for relief from them, but in vain: Mrs. Dorville had a high opinion of Miss Marshall, who took every opportunity to ingratiate herself with her, and was glad to indulge the indolence which forbade her to interfere, by declaring the entire confidence she placed in her judgment and good intentions, and her certainty that it must be Maria's fault if there was any disagreement between them.

CHAPTER II.

WHICH CONTAINS A CONTINUATION OF THE
CONTRASTED CHARACTER OF
MISS MARSHALL;
THE OUTLINES OF THAT OF MAJOR BERKLEY;
WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF TWO OTHER
CHARACTERS SOMEWHAT OUTRE.

MOROSE and unsocial as the governess's disposition appeared to her pupils, she was not proof against the *tender passion*, (if it may be so termed,) when felt, in all its violence, for an unfeeling man, who regarded not her attachment, who had no idea of *disinterested love*, and, at the

the very moment when she lavished her affections upon him, was endeavouring to ensnare the heart of her eldest pupil, whose large fortune would have been particularly desirable to him, to supply the place of his own, which he had nearly dissipated. But as, on account of the last mentioned circumstance, he could not make open proposals to Miss Dorville, who had always treated him with perfect indifference, Miss Marshall flattered herself that the compliments and attentions which he paid her rival, were the mere effusions of gallantry, and a superabundance of good humour, while herself was the happy object of his serious attachment. Major Berkley, who was far from being deficient in penetration or vanity, perceived the conquest he had made, and cherished her hopes, by a few blind looks, and now and then a hint of his particular regard, fearing, if she was undeceived, she

she might prove a dangerous opposer to his designs on the amiable Arabella, whom I am impatient to introduce to my reader. Let us, for that purpose, enter the drawing room at Beechwood, where Mrs. Dorville is lamenting the deplorable effects which a piercing east wind has had upon her delicate frame, and Miss Marshall condoling with her, on the melancholy occasion, in terms the most soothing.—“I cannot wonder,” cried she, “that you are so depressed, so languid; for the truly uncomfortable state which the atmosphere has been in for the last four days, had almost worn me out; and I am a Hercules when compared with you. I wish I could think of any thing that would amuse you.”

“ALAS,” answered Mrs. Dorville, “what is called amusement by the generality of the world, would be the greatest of all

all fatigues to me. I think I shall soon become totally incapable of all pleasing sensations, and alive to misery alone."

SHE was pleased with the affecting conclusion of her speech, and turning to her eldest daughter, "I think, my dear, it will sooth me to hear the soft air that you played yesterday; but consider the state of my nerves, and touch the keys as lightly as possible."

ARABELLA had scarce sat down to the harpsichord, before the attention of Maria was attracted by the sight of a chaise, which drove slowly by the park. She watched its approach with no small degree of pleasure; for she rejoiced at any addition to the usual family party; and when she saw it stop at the door, ran eagerly to her sister, and removing the music book from before her, "Stop, stop!"

stop!" cried she, "we have less harmonious sounds approaching: prepare to listen to the voluble Miss Lewis, who, with her brother, is at this moment in the hall."

"I BELIEVE you are not sorry for the exchange," said Arabella, smiling, and tapping her cheek as she rose from the instrument.

"WHY, I must own I love variety; and I have heard that solemn air at least twenty times."

SHE had scarce done speaking, when Miss Lewis, attended by her brother, entered the room.

I WOULD willingly place the picture of this lady before my reader; but the attempt will be in vain, unless his imagination will

will assist my pencil, and kindly supply its deficiencies. If he is unable, or unwilling, to do this, he must rest satisfied with a rude outline, and wait till future pages develope it more minutely.

Mrss Lewis was a single lady, of about thirty-eight, as tall as any woman of *four feet ten* in the three kingdoms; for her high heeled shoes supported her on tip-toe; and the easy grace of the fashionable stoop, could never prevail upon her to lose a single inch of her natural attitude. She was as handsome as a dark complexion, ill suited features, and a remarkable bad set of teeth, would permit her to be; for she had all the airs of a beauty, and, with the assistance of a pair of large black eyes, contrived to make some diffident people doubt whether she had not some claim to that appellation. The pedigree of her

her family, which was traced on a spreading tree that ornamented the hall of the ancient mansion where she resided, proved her descent from a Welch prince; and the consciousness of royal blood communicated to her manners a degree of insolence, which was sometimes thought unpleasant by her inferiors, to whom it was chiefly displayed: but she had abundance of animal spirits, and of what is usually termed good nature, and being an incessant talker, the quiet ones generally agreed in pronouncing her very conversable.

It may perhaps be expected that I should say something of her brother, but he had, as the phrase is, so very *little in him*, that his character would be scarce any thing more than a catalogue of deficiencies. He was, however, a tolerably smart little man *to look at*, dressed fashionably, and seldom contradicted any body.

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He was ten years younger than his sister, to whose opinions he appeared, on all occasions, to pay much deference; but this was no very flattering compliment, as he seemed to have formed few or none of his own.

"A most unpleasant accident has just happened to us," cried Miss Lewis, the moment she was seated. "We were engaged to spend the evening at Mr. Courteney's, where a very large party are assembled; but, before we were got half a mile beyond the park gate, one of our horses fell so lame, that we were obliged, in compassion to the poor animal, to give up our visit, and sending a servant to let Lady Anne know our misfortune: have with difficulty been able to reach this place. May we depend upon your goodness for a conveyance home."

MRS.

Mrs. Dorville returned a polite answer; and Miss Lewis, addressing the young ladies, enquired why they were not at Llangorwel; and why every family in the neighbourhood had cause to regret their unsocial seclusion from company.

"My mother's ill state of health," replied Arabella, "prevents my going very frequently from home; and Maria is not yet released from the confinement imposed by her governess."

"SURELY," said Miss Lewis, "that confinement need not now be so scrupulously insisted on: Miss Maria's age demands a participation of those pleasures which her education has already fitted her to enjoy and grace."

"I HAVE always been totally averse," interrupted Miss Marshall, "to the novel custom

custom of introducing children into company; and never knew a young lady, who was her own mistress at sixteen, make a tolerable figure at two and twenty. Premature blossoms are never known to arrive at any degree of perfection."

"You are perfectly right," cried Mrs. Dorville: "nothing can be more absurd than such a plan."

"WELL," said Mr. Lewis, attempting an air of archness, "you ladies may settle the point how you please among yourselves; but I heard a gentleman, who is allowed to have infinite wit, declare, the other day, that women, like apricots, were never half so pleasant as when unripe; and if so, what a sin it is to exclude them from us when they are most desirable!"

"I APPEAL,

" I APPEAL," cried Miss Marshall, angrily, " from low wit to good sense, which will, I trust, in a few years, render Miss Maria sensible of the worthlessness of those pleasures which her eyes, at this moment, express such eagerness for the premature possession of."

MARIA'S eyes did, indeed, sparkle with an impatience which would have manifested itself in words, had not the heavy cloud which hung on the brow of her governess, threatening future woe, awed her into silence. Arabella was hurt at the evident discomposure of her sister; and, to give the conversation a different turn, enquired when Miss Lewis had seen their neighbour Major Berkley.

" SEEN him!" replied she, " why not this age. I believe he is seldom to be met with in any house but this. Nay,

do not smile, and pretend to deny the truth of my assertion: it is really most unreasonable in you to engross the whole time and attention of the liveliest and most agreeable man in the country."

"INDEED," cried Mr. Lewis, "if report says true, he is a fortunate fellow: to spend three or four evenings in a week with such a lady, is a happiness which all others of his sex might envy him."

"REPORT is certainly right," replied Miss Marshall, colouring deeply, "with respect to the Major's frequent visits here; but the *object* of them it may possibly mistake; so well informed, so sensible a man—"

"—CANNOT be supposed insensible to the many perfections of Miss Dorville," interrupted Miss Lewis, with a malicious eagerness.

eagerness. "All things considered, indeed, who can blame him? but sufferers will complain; and, till the rising of parliament sends us a fresh supply of beaux, I shall continue to grudge you the entire possession of the Major."

"You are mistaken, I assure you," said Arabella. "If his visits here, this spring, have been more frequent than to other houses in the neighbourhood, it is not difficult to account for it: it is certainly less unpleasant to cross the park, and a couple of fields, in a dark or rainy night, than to ride two or three miles. But he generally calls in a morning, when I very seldom see him, for he goes immediately into the library, where he takes great pleasure in observing the progress of Maria's studies."

“AND I assure you,” cried Miss Marshall, “he has been of infinite use to her in one article; his intimate acquaintance with the Latin language, has enabled me to give her a much more perfect knowledge of it than I could otherwise have done. Then, you know, his taste and talents for conversation. He is fond, too, of drawing out the sentiments and opinions of others. I protest to you he has often led me unawares into discussions, and criticisms, which I have since thought must, at least in the eyes of any other man, have made me appear very pedantic.”

“I UNDERSTAND you, Madam: you are kindly anxious to take the blame, which I still lay on Miss Dorville, upon yourself. But I must be allowed to retain my opinion, that Berkley is too much a man of spirit, not to prefer flirtation to criticism by way of amusement; and I am
much

much mistaken, if his principal favourites have been selected from the very respectable society of learned ladies."

"VERY true, sister," cried the squire: "you are certainly in the right: we men love to keep those abstruse matters among ourselves; as, indeed, is most fit; and when we converse with ladies, look for a little relaxation."

THE governess again coloured, bit her lips, and was going to reply, with some asperity; but Mrs. Dorville, weary of so much altercation, proposed cards. The table was placed; and the king of trumps soon became a more interesting object than even the Major, to all, except Miss Marshall, who made a thousand mistakes, which fully proved that her attention was occupied by something foreign to her present employment. When the

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rubber

rubber was finished, Mr. Lewis, and his sister, took their leave; but not till they had endeavoured to engage their young friends to join a large party, who were to take the amusement of cards and cotillions, at Abberhonvy, a few days after. Arabella immediately promised to go: but poor Maria, though her eyes spoke much, and eloquently, in the way of intreaty, was resolutely denied the same privilege by her governess, who remained equally unmoved by their soft pleadings, and the pressing instances of Miss Lewis. Nor can we wonder at her obstinacy, when we consider the provocation she had just received, which, acting upon a temper naturally bad, might be expected to produce consequences the most unpleasant to her poor pupil, whose misfortune it was to be the only human being completely within the sphere of its pernicious influence, and on whom its whole weight must of course fall.

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH IS SHEWN THE SENSIBILITY OF THE
AMIALE ARABELLA,
IN A CONFLICT OF THE TENDER PASSIONS
WITH HER SISTER MARIA.

AS soon as her visitors were gone, Mrs. Dorville, declaring herself dreadfully fatigued, retired to her apartment for the night. The sisters sat silently musing upon the scene which had just passed; and Miss Marshall, pleased with the opportunity she had just had of indulging her spleen, amused herself with caressing

and saying a thousand kind things to her dear lap dog, who, in all the changes of her ever varying humour, was a constant favourite. When she was offended with any one, to Romeo did she complain; when fatigued by study, with Romeo did she relax; and when she was in a good humour, which, whatever my reader may imagine, was sometimes the case, her fondness was inconceivable for this charming creature, who, she would often declare, had more sense than half the world, and was capable of a degree of attachment she never saw equalled by any of the human race.

Soon after supper was removed, she was left to enjoy a *tête-a-tête* with this highly favoured animal, her pupils wishing her a good night, with that cold restrained respect which ever attends civilities paid to those whom we dislike. No sooner
had

had they reached Maria's dressing room, than she threw herself upon a sofa, and burst into tears. Shining drops glistened in the eyes of Arabella, as she seated herself beside her, and kindly taking one of her hands,

"WHAT can I say or do to remove my dear sister's uneasiness? Shall I endeavour to prevail upon our mother to remonstrate with this malicious governess?"

"REMONSTRATE!" cried the sobbing Maria: "I know, but too well, that remonstrances are in vain, or would rather increase the grievance. Nothing but her dismissal from the family can make me happy; and of that, entangled as we are with her, I have no hope. But of this I am well assured, we can never live five years longer together, which was the time intended, nay prescribed, by my cruel father."

“ HUSH, hush, Maria! say not a word against the best and tenderest of parents. Oh! were he but living, how instantly would your griefs be done away! He, who never saw a tear in the eye of a stranger without wishing to prevent its fall, would he have beheld, unmoved, the distress of his daughter? You know the motives, the generous source of his attachment to this ungrateful woman. Was she not the daughter of his friend, his companion, through long and dangerous campaigns? and when the unfortunate Captain Marshall received his mortal wound, did not our father himself convey him to his tent, and, by his assurances of favour and protection to his orphan, render happy the last moments of that brave man?”

“ BUT why could he not have done all this without introducing her into his own family? Would not giving her an independent

dent fortune, and suffering her to live where she pleased, have been amply fulfilling his promise?"

"He could not foresee what has since happened; and, at the death of her aunt, (who, having only a life income, could do no more for her than she had, in giving her a most liberal education,) brought her to our mother, begging her to look upon and treat her as a friend and equal; and to us he presented her as an elder sister, who, from her good sense, and various accomplishments, demanded all the respect and attention that we could pay her; and would be a valuable addition to our family, as long as we could make it agreeable to her to remain in it: and she then, indeed, appeared perfectly amiable. How did I love, and endeavour to console, her! and how grateful did she then seem! how anxious for our improvement!"

“ SAY rather, how anxious was she to gain an establishment for herself. What did she take so much pains to unveil the artifices of our French governess for, but that she might get her dismissed, and take her place?”

“ WHATEVER were her real motives, they appeared disinterested; and my father often mentioned, with high approbation, the independent spirit which induced her to solicit so warmly for an employment which required so much care and attention, rather than be obliged to the unrequited bounty of a friend for her support: and, till the ever-to-be regretted day when he was taken from us, she had art enough so to rein in her natural disposition, that a little uncertainty of temper was all that could be placed in the opposite scale against her many accomplishments, and apparent good qualities. Is it

it then surprizing that our dear father, in his truly paternal care for his family, should regulate every thing as he did? How forcibly does that awful hour return at this moment to my recollection, when, kneeling round his bed, we received his last precious blessing and instructions! Not a word he then uttered can ever be effaced from my memory! I now feel the pressure of that dear trembling hand! that soft and gentle voice now vibrates on my ear!—You, my Maria, were too young to be fully sensible of your loss; but his goodness had made so strong an impression on your susceptible heart, that you fainted long before the close of the awful scene. How did his eyes follow you, as they conveyed you out of the room! and the moment they lost their object, with what ardour were they raised to heaven! doubtless, to implore a blessing on his child. At that time I forgot myself; I shed

shed not a tear; I grieved not; my whole soul was absorbed in the idea of my father! I anxiously attended to each look, each motion, and felt every word he spoke, as it were engraven on my heart! Miss Marshall kneeled next to, and supported, my mother. He turned his eyes on her.

‘You will, I know,’ said he, ‘continue your care and attention to my children; for my sake let it be vigilant, and extended beyond the term usually allotted. Do not leave them till Maria is of age. From that time I have, by my will, secured to you the independance you so well deserve.’ With clasped hands did she then pronounce a solemn promise, which it now wrings my heart to think how ill she performs.”

“PARDON me, pardon me, dear Arabella, for the tears I have now cost you. I will try to be less impatient: but my temper

temper is not like yours; yet I am not ungenerous, or insensible of the kind regard which I experience on every occasion from you: but can I, is it *possible* that I should live five years longer under the dominion of this tyrannical woman!"

"NAY, Maria, two years will put an end to the principal part of your difficulties. At eighteen you know it was our father's will that we should, in some measure, act for ourselves; or he would not have ordered an augmentation of our incomes from one to three hundred pounds a year, to take place at that time. You see how trifling my restraints have been since that period: in little more than five months I shall be of age, and entirely independent with regard to Miss Marshall; and, after that time, I can, with more propriety, exert myself in endeavouring to lessen the rigours of your confinement."

"How

“ How happy are you in the near prospect of compleat liberty! My tears *will* flow, when I think of the shocking contrast in our situations. O, that I could annihilate the two, nay the five next years of my life; for I can never be at ease while the object of my aversion dwells under the same roof with me.”

“ Now, indeed, Maria, you distress me. Did you not promise to be patient? Do not be ungrateful to that gracious Being who hath bestowed upon you so large a share of those gifts and advantages, which are looked up to by all his creatures as blessings.”

“ I AM sensible, Arabella, of the justness of what you say; and I know that you would be the first to practise the lesson you kindly endeavour to enforce on me, but I fear I shall never be able to

imitate you. Leave me, however, for the present, to reflect upon what you have said, and to try to moderate the throbbings of this ungovernable heart. Good night, dear sister."

AFTER an affectionate embrace, they separated. Maria indulged her tears for some minutes, then endeavoured to collect all the consolation she could from what she had just heard, undressed herself with some assistance from her maid, whose chat contributed not a little to relieve her, and went to bed, where, after heaving a few gentle sighs, she fell into a sleep too profound to be disturbed, even by the recollection of a tyrannical governess, and five years confinement.

ARABELLA was not so soon composed: she was really distressed at the disagreeable restraints which were imposed upon
her

her sister, and the more, as she knew the extreme irritability of her temper, which, added to a delicate constitution, rendered her very unfit to encounter difficulties of any kind. When she was nearly undressed, she found herself so little disposed to sleep, that she again seated herself on the sofa, and was for some minutes wholly absorbed in reflections of the most unpleasant kind. At length, clasping her hands together, "O, most dear and tender parent!" she exclaimed, "what increasing reason have I every day and hour to lament thy loss! No misfortune, no unhappiness, could ever have reached thy children, had thy guardian arm been spared for their protection! Yes, all that can be imagined of unfortunate, was included in that one fatal loss!"—Here she paused for some minutes, and the tears chased each other down her lovely cheeks. Then recollecting herself, "but didst thou
not

not, in our last solemn interview, charge me, never, upon any occasion, to indulge useless and unavailing sorrow? and shall I, in lamenting thy loss, forget to attend to thy instructions? No, best of men, I will, as far as my weak mind will permit, in every thing obey thee; and endeavour to strengthen its resolution, by reflecting unceasingly on thy excellent lessons, and bright example."

SHE hastily wiped the tears from her eyes: they were ready to flow again; but, determined to get the better of her feelings, she took from her book-case the last volume of the Spectator, and opening it at No. 571, began to read. At first she was scarcely able to command her attention, but the subject was such as could not fail to interest a mind like hers. She felt herself greatly relieved as she proceeded. At length her uneasiness entirely subsided, and her griefs fled

fled before the delightful consciousness that she was one of the number of happy beings, whose felicity is so well defined in this admirable essay, who rejoice in the continual presence of their Maker.

SHE laid down her book, and ceasing to lament a short separation from her earthly parent, looked up, with grateful confidence, to her Father in heaven.

CHAPTER IV.

CONTAINING A FARTHER ILLUSTRATION OF THE
GOODNESS OF HEART OF ARABELLA;
WITH A TRIFLING SKETCH OF THE LEVITY
OF MARIA.

NOTWITHSTANDING the disturbance of the preceding evening, Arabella arose betimes the following day. She had, ever since her residence in the country, accustomed herself to early hours, and delighted to behold the rays of the sun first gild the brows of the mountains, then the tops of the stately trees, and at length condescend to slant over the humble

ble grass upon the lawn, turning every drop of dew into a beauteous gem. Behind the amphitheatre of beech trees, which I have before mentioned, rose a beautiful hill, crowned with oaks, the growth of the last century. Under one of the most majestic which arose in front, the late Colonel had placed a seat; for it was a spot he was particularly fond of; and had the place been far less charming than it really was, his partiality would have endeared it to his affectionate daughter. Sometimes, at early dawn, would she direct her steps towards it, that she might attain the eminence, and enraptured contemplate the rising sun, which, to her raised imagination, seemed like some sublime and benevolent being, coming forward, in silent majesty, to bless and enlighten the whole creation. Then would she feel her heart expanded by the sight, and, in the expressive words of her favourite

rite

rite Milton, call upon all nature to join her morning hymn of praise!

BUT stop, thou wandering pen, who startest at no difficulties, however unequal thou art to surmounting them; though thy breath never fails thee, my reader may perhaps be tired with toiling up so steep an ascent, is no friend to these early rambles, has never climbed a hill in his life, or been wet with the morning dew! If so, I beg his pardon for engaging him in so fatiguing an expedition, which was really unnecessary, as Arabella took a different road.—Come, lean upon my arm, and we will follow her as gently as you please.

THE morning was too hazy for a prospect; and she went, accompanied by Mrs. Johnson, a faithful and affectionate servant, who always attended her on these little expeditions, towards a retired dell, which,

which, though only a quarter of a mile beyond the park wall, and capable of being rendered the most delicious spot upon the estate, had hitherto been neglected.

HER father's property extended to a considerable distance every way round his house; and he had not confined his attention to what is generally termed the pleasure ground, but ornamented and improved, as far as it was in his power, the whole country, looking upon every beautiful object, which his eye commanded in the most extensive prospect, with as much delight as if it had been his exclusive possession. Arabella had been the constant companion of his walks and rides; and, young as she was, he boasted that he had received many useful hints from her in the formation of his grounds. He was fond of realizing her ideas of beauty, which had
more

more originality in them, than he found in the plans of the more experienced. Since his death, she had amused herself with superintending the improvements which he had left unfinished. The romantic dell, to which she this morning directed her steps, had particularly attracted her notice; and she had been employed, for some time, in directing the course of a path which was to lead through it to the foot of a steep rock, from whence a rapid stream precipitated itself. The place had, till now, been nearly inaccessible; a sun beam had scarce penetrated through the close foliage of the trees for half a century past; and the underwood was so thick, that no animals, larger than the numerous family of birds, who had long exclusively inhabited this peaceful retreat, could easily get a passage through it.

ARABELLA beheld the path daily advancing towards the rock with a high degree of pleasure; and sat down on the root of a tree to rest herself, and observe its progress, when one of the workmen came for farther orders followed by a boy, who appeared to be about nine years old. "Are you come hither, little fellow," cried she, "to assist in cutting down the trees?"

"He would fain do so, madam," answered his father, "but he was just now so near lopping off one of his arms, that he must leave his work, I believe, and be content to stay at home till he is more able."

"Yet it is a pity," replied Arabella, "to repress the first dawnings of so valuable a quality as industry. Come hither, my dear; if you have a mind to work, I will employ you: What say you?"

THE

THE child advanced slowly towards her, yet appeared highly delighted.

“ HAVE you any brothers and sisters?”

“ AYE, I have; but I am the biggest, all but Billy.”

“ WELL, bring Billy, and all the rest, with you here to-morrow morning. I have sweet-briars, snow-drops, daffodils, and many other things to disperse about this place; and, I think, if we can get tools of a proper size, Johnson and I shall be able to direct you, and your little companions, how and where to plant them. Will you be sure to come?”

“ AYE, that I will, and Bill and Pat.”

“ THAT’S my good boy. Be sure to come early; and if you work hard, I will

give you sixpence a day among you for wages."

"HEAVEN blefs you, my good lady," cried the poor man. "Why dont you thank madam, and fay you'll come."

A bow fo low that the foot, which was lifted up behind, rofe to a level with the bending head, and a fmiling look, expreffed at once his gratitude and pleasure, and turning to his father,

"I KNOW'S I can do it; for Bill and I fet the honey-fuckle and old man by our houfe, befides houghing the cabbages laft week."

ARABELLA, pleafed with his readinefs, gave him fixpence, as an earneft of her future favour, which turned the fmile into a broad grin, and compleated his happinefs.

THE usual hour of returning was now arrived; and, after walking along as far as the path extended, and giving some further orders about it, Arabella, and her attendant, ascended the steep bank which led to the park, but had scarcely reached the top, before they beheld Maria coming to meet them.

“How happens it, my love, that you are up so early?” cried Arabella. “This walk is really a surprising exertion. I hope it hath not arisen from uneasiness, from inability to sleep.”

“WHY no, not entirely,” answered Maria; “yet I spent no very comfortable night; and I feel that I shall never be able to bear, with patience, the grievances which torment me hourly; yet I am more reasonable than I was last night, and came out thus early, on purpose to have an opportunity of talking to you a little more

on the subject, while sleep closes the eyes of my watchful Argus."

"AND what, my dear Maria, can I do for you? Express but a wish within the compass of my power, and assure yourself of its completion. I will, with pleasure, give up the party at Abberhonvy."

"No; I am far from being so ungenerous as to find a pleasure in lessening the number of your amusements. Had I the liberty you have, I would take ten, aye a thousand times as many. Beechwood should not long be my habitation: at least my excursions from it should occupy three fourths of my time; and I would view my home in the only light in which a woman of spirit would ever wish to behold it, as a retreat in which I might rest after one delightful round of pleasure, till I had contrived another. But, alas! this is foreign

reign to my present purpose. All that I can, for a long time, hope for, is a mitigation of my present rigorous confinement. You say you will exert your power for me: do then prevail upon my mother to invite Mrs. Harley, who, I have just heard, is now at Cowbridge, to come and spend a month or two with us. I know she is no favourite of yours: her conduct may not, in all respects, perhaps, be strictly justifiable; but she is certainly very amusing; and her influence over Miss Marshall, which I know I can direct as I please, will give me a number of indulgencies."

"I WOULD rather they were procured by any other means," interrupted Arabella.

"You really distress me by this request."

"BUT do not refuse it, dear sister. Indeed it is the only plan I can think of to

make the summer tolerably chearful; for I am sure she can procure permission for me to be of all your parties; instead of which, if you can be so cruel as not to oblige me, my fate will be to sit mopeing or crying over my books and harpsichord, day after day, and week after week."

" THEN you mean that she shall stay the whole summer; but your intention, in that respect, is of no great consequence; for, when once here, it will be no easy task to remove her: her fortune renders it convenient; and her rage for amusement highly desirable to her to live any where rather than at home."

" NAY," cried Maria, " if you are determined to refuse me the only consolation my situation will admit of"—A violent burst of tears here stopt her utterance.

" REFUSE."

"REFUSE," replied Arabella, in a tender tone: "you are sensible that I can refuse you nothing. I know not whether I am not too easily prevailed upon, by the importunities of those I love, to act against my own judgment: I shall do so by indulging you in the present instance. Mrs. Harley is a woman I by no means like; and I am convinced she is a most improper companion for my Maria. Do therefore oblige me by giving up the scheme."

"INDEED, indeed I cannot," answered Maria. "My heart was never more eagerly set upon any thing; and if you will but this once comply with my humour, I will be ruled by you in every thing, and try to be content and happy."

ARABELLA could resist no longer; but was reluctantly prevailed upon to promise to make the desired request to her

mother that very morning, which in an instant raised the spirits of her sister to a high pitch. A flush of pleasure glowed in her cheeks: she thanked her, over and over, for her kindness; and, fondly hanging on her arm, entertained her, all the way home, with projects which Mrs. Harley was to assist her in realizing, and which were to be equally mortifying to her governess, and pleasurable to herself.

WHEN they reached the house, they were informed that Miss Marshall had been waiting for them, in the breakfast parlour, at least ten minutes; and the first glance of her eye convinced them that she was highly offended.

“ So, ladies, you are at length returned. I wish you had been considerate enough to have consulted your watches, which, it is possible, might have informed you that
nine

nine o'clock has been long since past; and as, notwithstanding the delicate state of my health, and the very small portion of rest which the night affords me, I generally contrive to leave my room at so early an hour, I think Miss Dorville might condescend to finish her morning ramble, and meet me by that time, particularly as you know I always feel extremely weak and exhausted till I have taken some refreshment."—Oh! thought Maria, that thy malice was weak, and thy ill-nature exhausted.—

ARABELLA rather pitied her ill temper than resented the effects of it; and, beginning to make the tea, told her, with great sweetness, that she was till then quite unconscious of having exceeded her usual time, and was sorry if she had been a sufferer by it.

"BUT pray, Miss Maria," said the still frowning governess, "how come *you* to exert yourself so wonderfully this morning? is the whim of early rising come upon *you*?" Then, without waiting for an answer, "Romé, Romé, come hither, my pretty creature. O, you sweet fellow, come to your tea. *You*, at least, look pleasantly upon me, and are not too fullen to eat your breakfast." Then turning to her pupil, "I suppose I am not to be favoured with an answer."

"You did not give me an opportunity to make one, Madam," replied Maria, indignantly.

"O FIE, Romeo," proceeded Miss Marshall, "refuse to eat from my hand; perverse little animal! O fie, fie." He snapt at her fingers. "Well, well, don't be angry. I will not force thee, poor, pretty

pretty creature." At the conclusion of this eloquent harangue she gave him several tender careffes, and, placing him on her arm, suddenly rose, and, spilling half a bowl of tea over the table, hurried out of the room.

"WELL, Arabella, what say you to this ill-bred insolence? Is it to be borne?"

"BORNE it must be; so we may as well let it fit lightly on our minds."

"AND so it shall in the present instance, at least," cried Maria; "for I will have a little diversion with her when she returns. She often torments, and, for once, shall amuse me. You look surprised; but you shall see how delightfully I will tease her. Come, sweet Miss Marshall; you shall be all good humour and complaisance, even *with me*, in the course
of

of the next ten minutes." Then running to the door, she opened it, and, soon after hearing her advancing, shut it gently, laid her finger on her lips, and, with a look of mock solemnity, re-seated herself at the table. The governess entered humming a tune, and, without taking the least notice of the sisters, placed herself near a window, and took up a review.

"So you will write immediately to invite Mrs. Harley here," cried Maria, "if I desire it."

CERTAINLY," answered Arabella, willing to indulge her playful humour; "and I can hardly imagine that you will object to it."

"WHY, I don't know. I think she will be too bustling, too gay for me."

THE review was instantly laid down. "Too gay!" cried Miss Marshall, eagerly; "Is that possible?"

"VERY possible, considering the humour I have been in of late. I think I shall soon contract an aversion for amusements of every kind."

"BUT this unreasonable gravity ought not to be indulged," replied the governess, in a soft tone. "Mrs. Harley's liveliness will assist greatly in dissipating it. The Major, too, will, of course, spend more time with us, when his sister is here; and you were always fond of his society."

"WHY, that is very true. Major Berkley will certainly be glad to spend as many hours as he can every day with so near a relation, whom he has scarce seen for the last three years. But of what consequence

sequence will all this be to me, who am debarred from the participation of any kind of pleasure?"

"NAY, my dear, you know it has been entirely out of my regard to your delicate constitution, and uneven spirits, that I have done myself the violence to deny you any thing; and if you find yourself depressed and unwell, instead of being benefited by my plan, we must alter it a little."

"You are very kind, Madam: and may I hope for more indulgence than I have hitherto experienced?"

"You may assure yourself of every thing within my power; and the alteration shall commence on the very day that our lively friend arrives."

"WELL,

"WELL, I am extremely obliged to you; but still continue doubtful about the propriety of inviting her. Perhaps the Major will think Arabella does it in compliment to him, and presume upon it."

"Now you are quite absurd, Miss Maria. Your sister has too much understanding to imagine visits and attentions, which the discerning part of the world are pleased to lay to my account, intended for her!"

"NAY, I do not speak from my own observation; but every body says Berkley is dying for her; and it would certainly be a tacit encouragement to the report, and to him, to invite his sister here."

THE poor governess lost all patience, and was going to reply with asperity, but suddenly recollecting that further opposition would only serve to strengthen Maria's

ria's supposed objections, her countenance softened in an instant, and, after telling her she hoped and believed she would alter her opinion, left the room in the most perfect apparent good humour.

MARIA could scarce stifle a laugh till she was out of hearing; but running up to her sister, threw her arms round her neck, and seating herself on the sofa by her, "Was not this excellent?" cried she. "How beautifully her complexion changed from brown to red, and then again to brown! and her eyes how animated! Well, every body must allow her to have a most expressive countenance. Thank you for the little assistance you gave me; it was a great deal for you. I never knew a girl without a grain of taste for mischief but yourself. You have no joy but in communicating pleasure, which I think the most insipid thing in the world."

"I own,"

" I own," replied Arabella, " Miss Marshall deserves to do penance for her treatment of you. She is the most selfish of women; but yet I wish you took less delight in teasing even her."

" O, do not attempt to reprove me. I am so charmed with her civility, and the cause of it, that I will love you for ever, if you will enable me to prolong her anxiety and mortification. Do not say a word about the invitation to my mother till to-morrow, and I shall have the pleasure of perplexing her about it all to-day. Nay, my dear girl, do not look so grave: surely this is a very allowable degree of retaliation: do promise to indulge me a little longer."

" Most readily will I suspend writing to Mrs. Harley; though I wish you had a better motive for desiring it. I most sincerely

cerely wish you would resolve to disappoint Miss Marshall entirely, by releasing me from my promise of writing at all: indeed it would greatly oblige me."

"O, THAT I positively cannot: so if you have any compassion or good-nature, you will cease to ask it. But hark! the clock strikes ten; a signal at which I start—and scud away as fearfully as the poor forlorn ghost at the crowing of the cock! Governess, pens, pencils, books, globes, and harpsichord—O horrible assemblage!—all await me!—I come, I come!"—and away she ran, leaving her sister half amused, and half distressed, by her inconsiderate levity.

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH THE READER WILL BE ENTERTAINED
WITH THE CHARACTERISTIC PORTRAITS OF
LADY ANNE COURTENAY,
AND HER EQUESTRIAN DAUGHTER.

A RABELLA remained, for some minutes, entirely absorbed in reflection: for strange as it may appear, that a lady at her time of life, with every thing generally esteemed desirable in her power, should give herself the fatigue of *thinking* upon any subject, it is certain that she had so long accustomed herself to that unfashionable

unfashionable occupation, that it was actually become habitual to her; and, what is still more extraordinary, she was desirous that her mind should be even *usefully* employed. Strange ideas these for a beautiful heiress of twenty. That a person, so situated, should be, in the full extent of the word, a *rational* being, is, indeed, wonderful: but surprising things do sometimes happen; and I intreat my reader not to be certain that a thing is impossible, because he has never witnessed the like with his own eyes.

ARABELLA rang the bell, and enquired whether her mother was up; and being answered in the affirmative, attended her, according to her usual custom, in her dressing room. Mrs. Dorville was sitting in an easy chair, drinking chocolate, by the side of a large fire, which, notwithstanding the advanced period of the season,

son, she thought absolutely necessary, as she was informed the wind was still in the same chilling point. "How do you do, my dear madam?" cried Arabella, as she approached her: "how did you rest last night?"

"VERY indifferently, my love; very poorly indeed. I need not return the question: the roses on your cheeks inform me that you have no sleepless nights. How is Maria?"

"IN more than usual spirits: she joined me in my morning walk."

"I REJOICE to hear it," replied Mrs. Dorville, heaving a deep sigh. "I wish I could boast of any amendment in mine; but I am, if possible, more languid than ever: how I shall be able to go through the day, I cannot imagine."

"WILL,

“WILL you permit me to read to you?” I am sure you will be amused with Mr. Harley’s *Serena*; it is a charming poem.”

“ANOTHER time, perhaps, I may; but, at present, I can attend to nothing. If the sun continues to shine, I think I will take an airing at one o’clock; and if you have no other engagement, I hope you will accompany me: till then, my dear, I will dispense with your attendance.” Arabella signified her ready compliance, and immediately withdrew from her mother’s apartment. She went into the shrubbery, and directed what plants and flowers she would have taken up to employ her young labourers, and ornament her favourite dell; but gave no orders for the disposition of them, resolving to be on the spot herself for that purpose early the next morning.

AT

At the appointed time she attended her mother to the coach; and the day was so delightfully fine, that even Mrs. Dorville could not help acknowledging that it was pleasant, and, by the time they had gone about a mile, owned that she found herself refreshed. She did more, she thought herself equal to going a *whole mile* further to pay a visit to her neighbour Lady Anne Courteney. Arabella, astonished at her resolution, gave orders to the servant to proceed to Llangorwel, where they arrived soon after, and were ushered into a parlour, where all the apparatus for breakfast was placed in readiness, but no one came down to partake of it. In a few minutes, however, Miss Courteney made her appearance, equipped in a riding habit, which was her constant morning dress; and addressing them with her usual freedom, "You must certainly think us the idlest creatures in the world; and I will

not say a word in vindication of my mother: she must, at all events, plead guilty to the charge: but, for myself, I assure you I have been up more than an hour. I always make it a rule to visit my favourite horse the first thing in the morning; and to day I have been detained longer than usual with him; for we took so long a ride yesterday, that we were obliged to get on at an amazing rate, to be at home in any tolerable time, and part of the road being very stony, it has absolutely lamed the dear creature—Was it not very unfortunate?"

"ACCIDENTS of that kind will sometimes happen," replied Mrs. Dorville.

"BUT this was particularly unlucky; for we had resolved upon going to Corthwayn common this morning, where I was to have trotted a race with Major Berkley.

He

He has the assurance to think his Gipsey will out do my Nabob, which I am positive he cannot. Mr. Courteney and he have laid a large wager about it; but it cannot now be decided to day, which is excessively provoking; but, what is still worse, I shall have nothing to ride but a frightful little poney for, I suppose, a fortnight to come; for I dare say Lady Anne would not lend me her's if I was to kneel to her; and for my father's hunters, I might as well ask for one of his teeth."

"You are in a most unfortunate predicament," replied Arabella, smiling.

"UNFORTUNATE indeed," reiterated Miss Courteney. "I really don't know what I shall do. How I envy you that beautiful chesnut! So idle a rider can scarce be said to deserve so spirited an animal. I think I never saw you exceed a

canter, but that one time when Victoria was run away with, and so near being demolished. To be sure I behaved excessively ill on that occasion; but, if my life had depended upon it, I could not have helped laughing. You fled like lightning to the place where she was thrown. I think I never saw a horse go at so delightful a pace."

"It is not merely the exercise of riding that I enjoy," replied Arabella, "when I take an airing; the scenes around us are so beautiful and various, that I find a never ceasing pleasure in viewing them."

"Well," cried Miss Courteney, "prospects are to me, at best, but lifeless, uninteresting things. But how you can possibly be amused with the same dull repetition of hills, woods, and water-falls,
over

over and over again, is truly wonderful."

AT this instant Lady Anne entered, habited in the most careless dishabille. Indeed, her cloaths could hardly be said to be put on at all; for she had scarce allowed herself a separate pin for each article. After politely expressing the pleasure she felt from Mrs. Dorville's unexpected visit, she apologized for not being in readiness to receive them; "but Miss Courteney has probably informed you," proceeded she, "that we had a most fatiguing expedition yesterday, which, of course, indisposed us for early rising this morning. Have you breakfasted? You will drink chocolate, I hope. Where is Miss Maria?"

"SHE always spends the morning with her governess," replied Mrs. Dorville, "and, indeed, a large part of every evening

ing, for I wish her to attend very closely to her improvements."

"QUITE too closely, in my opinion," resumed her Ladyship. "She is nearly the same age with Miss Courteney, and I should think it a high degree of cruelty to confine her. Indeed," turning to her daughter, and laughing, "I fancy I should find it no easy task."

"SUPPOSE you make the trial, mamma, only for one month, to see how I shall bear it."

"No, no, my dear; I know you too well to venture it. I should expect, and deserve, to hear, that you had eloped with a half pay lieutenant, or the curate of the parish, before half that time was over." Here both mother and daughter laughed aloud. Mrs. Dorville was a little piqued:
your

your Ladyship's mode of education and mine have always been essentially different: but, in matters of such importance, every mother should be guided by her own judgment."

"CERTAINLY she should," replied Lady Anne; "and I am sure every body must allow that Miss Dorvilles do infinite credit to your's. I think I hear Berkley coming. Pray, Julia, rally him on his early rising." This obedient daughter rose instantly, and meeting him at the door,

"NAY, Sir, this is quite too great an exertion. Here's my watch; it is little more than two o'clock!"

"FAITH, Madam," replied he, "I never think of time when I am here. The two last days have appeared but two moments; the present will be the same; and

how is it possible to render so short a period desirable? Good morning to your Ladyship." Then turning to the visitants, "this is an unhopèd-for happiness: the fair inhabitants of the park are so seldom to be seen without its pale, that I must put this day down in my list of fortunate ones."

"AND pray," cried Miss Courteney, "how many of those have you generally in the course of a year?"

"IT is in your power to make them three hundred and sixty-five: but what a deduction must I make for those long dreary months you spent in London last winter!"

"LONG, dreary months," replied Miss Courteney. "O, you wretch, for so mis-calling them, they were the happiest of my
my

my life. Indeed, our existence here, in Wales, can hardly be termed so. Don't you doat upon the town diversions," turning to Miss Dorville?

"SOME of them are certainly capable of giving a high degree of pleasure: but they are generally hurried over in too quick a succession, and, by that means, the agreeable effect, which each would singly produce is lost, upon the whole."

"WELL," returned Miss Courteney, "that is to me what gives a zest to all. A concert, a ball, a rout, and a supper, made the dull amusement of four evenings, would vapour one to death: I would as soon sit at home and talk politics, or read sermons."—Here the Major and Lady Anne laughed aloud—"But crowd them all into one night, and they are enchanting!"

E 5

"BRAVO?"

"BRAVO! bravissimo! cried Berkley: "this is spirit! I tremble for the poor right honourable who is to have the honour of your hand in marriage. Heaven grant him a double portion of sobriety and prudence, for his better half will not deal in either of those articles. Are we to have the happiness of meeting you, Madam, and Miss Dorville, at Lewis's, on Wednesday?"

"ARABELLA will be there. My spirits are not equal to so great an exertion as is necessary to enjoy a large party."

"WHY, I find all the country are to be assembled, and we are to have a ball. Some hints of the matter were communicated to me three weeks or a month ago."

"THAT

"THAT is not at all surprizing," cried her Ladyship. "The lady of the house would certainly take care to secure her own partner in good time."

"O, FAITH, I am the worst dancer in the world; and if such is Miss Lewis's intentions, there is only one method that can enable me to go through the night with tolerable spirit, and that is securing one of these fair ladies for a partner. Surely you will not be so cruel as to refuse me. Consider, if I do not go into the room an engaged man, the evident risk I run of being given up, for the evening, the miserable victim of age and ugliness. Sure I see a gentler fate in the benignant eyes of Miss Dorville!"

"No, Sir," answered she. "I will leave you to your destiny whatever it may be; and am determined not to derange

Miss Lewis's plan, if she has really formed one."

"Then," resumed he, "I must place my whole reliance here," taking Miss Courteney's hand, which she hastily withdrew, piqued that he had not first applied to her.

"NONE of your second-rate offers, I beseech you, faucy creature. Miss Lewis, ugly as she is, is too good for you; and I hope you will be obliged to dangle with her from eight at night till four in the morning."

"HEAVEN and earth!" cried he, "I would as soon broil upon a gridiron! Never trust me if I am not amply revenged upon you, for harbouring so horrible an idea, before this evening is over!"

MRS.

Mrs. Dorville, perceiving, through a window, Mr. Courteney, and several other gentlemen, coming towards the house, determined to put an end to her visit, and avoid the fatigue of speaking to them. She accordingly rose, and bid Lady Anne and her daughter adieu. The Major attended them to their coach, and said, in a low voice, to Arabella, as they past through the hall, "What a treat! What a refreshment will a day spent at Beechwood be, after the noise and nonsense of this place! How long will the next four-and-twenty hours appear!"

"O FIE, Mr. Berkley," replied she, satirically, smiling, "can a *moment* be long?"

"O THOSE were mere words of course!"

"AND may not all you say be termed so?"

THE

THE coach drove away; and he could only intimate the contrary, by throwing himself into a pensive attitude, and laying his hand upon his breast.

THEY arrived at home but a short time before dinner; and, while Arabella was dressing, Maria came into the room in the gayest humour imaginable. "O, I have had the pleafantest morning you can conceive: I have been so complimented, so flattered, that I begin to fancy myself all perfection. Our not having seen Berkeley for the last three days, alarms poor Miss Marshall excessively. She fears he has formed some new attachment, and is more eager than you can imagine to get his sister here. We shall have diversion without end when she comes. All the fawning compliments, which she is now disposed to pay me, will then be transferred to her; and she will receive them

them with such gravity, and return them with so much humour!"

"Does she know, then, that you have resolved to ask Mrs. Harley?"

"I HAVE given her great hopes, but no positive assurance of it."

"WELL, as you have apparently yielded to her persuasions, she will, perhaps, treat you with more lenity, at least for some time, on that account."

"If she does, it will be more than I expect. It is far more probable that, the moment she has gained her point, her temper will return to its natural moroseness. You have frequently tried to soften her by kindness, by valuable presents, and by a degree of submission which she had no right to exact: and now tell me truly, had

had any of these methods even a temporary good effect?"

"INDEED, I cannot boast that they ever had; she is the most impenetrable of human beings."

"THEN, dear Bella, suffer me to play a few tricks upon her when the widow comes. I assure you they shall be perfectly harmless."

"I ONLY fear their effect on your own mind. To take delight in tormenting even a malicious being, is, in a degree, to imitate her; and would my Maria wish to resemble the woman who is her aversion, in what she must own the very worst trait in her dark mind?"

"You see every thing in so serious a light—But the dinner bell rings.—Pray
put

put on a smiling look, or poor *dear* Miss Marshall will think you are losing your spirits as well as me, and, sweet, *tender creature*, be quite inconsolable."

AT dinner all was complaisance on the part of Miss Marshall; and, willing to secure the invitation as soon as possible, while Maria continued in the same humour, she mentioned the scheme to Mrs. Dorville, confessing her fondness for Mrs. Harley's society, and hoping she could have no objection to her coming.

"I LEAVE it entirely to Arabella," answered Mrs. Dorville. "I feel myself unable to contribute towards the amusement of any one; but if she wishes to invite any of her friends, she has my free permission."

MARIA

MARIA looked archly at her sister, and was strongly tempted to cross a plan which occasioned such triumph to her enemy; but recollecting that it was possible her mother might join in any objections that she raised, and well knowing that Arabella would not combat them, she durst not venture, lest her new raised hopes should, in a moment, be levelled with the ground. All, therefore, went on as the governess wished. A concise letter of invitation was written by Arabella, as soon as they rose from table; and, to indulge Maria's impatience, dispatched by a purpose messenger, who was to bring an answer that night. Miss Marshall was so perfectly satisfied with the arrangement of the whole affair, that, to the great astonishment of the sisters, her good humour continued, without the slightest interruption, during the remainder of the day.

CHAPTER IV.

WHERE THE READER WILL BE INTRODUCED TO
AN ACQUAINTANCE WITH MRS. HARLEY,
WHO MAKES A DISTINGUISHED FIGURE IN THE
FOLLOWING PAGES.

ARABELLA punctually kept her appointment, the next morning, with her little expectants, at the dell. They were all eagerness to execute her commands; and she felt a real pleasure in contemplating their innocent and happy countenances, and the joyous avidity with which they attended to her directions. On her way home, Mrs. Johnson informed

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ed her that Mrs. Harley was expected at Beechwood that night. "Sure you are mistaken," cried she; "for I mentioned no particular time in my note, only saying the chaise should attend her any day that she would fix. Maria received her answer; and I had so little doubt concerning its contents, that I did not ask her a single question."

"Miss Maria, Madam, knew what to expect; for she sent a message yesterday, by James, to say how eagerly she expected her; and how much it would oblige her, if she could contrive to come to night."

"WHAT an impatient temper!" exclaimed Arabella. "I do all in my power to moderate it; but my efforts are more than counteracted by Miss Marshall, who, by continual opposition, keeps her mind in

in a state of irritability very unfavourable to my wishes."

HERE all conversation, between Arabella and her attendant, ceased till they arrived near the house, when she gave orders that the chaise should be sent immediately to Cowbridge, and an apartment prepared for the reception of their expected guest.

ON entering the breakfast parlour, she was surprized to see Major Berkley seated on the sofa *tête-a-tête* with Miss Marshall. He arose somewhat hastily as she entered; but his countenance remained immoveable, though that of his companion underwent many alterations, and approaching Miss Dorville, "Heaven be praised," cried he, "I have made my escape from that house of riot, breathe this pure air, and once more bask in the sunshine of your eyes. Charming Miss Dorville,

Dorville, when I gaze upon that gentle and benignant countenance, when I view the roses which temperance and exercise are daily renewing on your cheeks, and the lovely composure spread over the whole, which speaks the happy state of the bright inhabitant of that sweet form, how I detest the senseless noise, and fatiguing levity, with which every hour at Llangorwel is filled! How does the contrast heighten my sense of your perfections, and aversion for their folly!"

"NAY, Major," cried Arabella, "do not stop so soon. I expected a whole string of compliments, and you have exhausted your stock already."

"Ah, Madam! whoever attempts to do justice to your merits, must even fall infinitely short, for they are innumerable, and the theme of course inexhaustible."

"THEN

“ THEN suppose we lay it aside both at present and in future. I assure you I am truly weary of the subject; and as it is one you own yourself unequal to, you must appear to a disadvantage in its discussion.”

“ BUT I take such pleasure, such exquisite delight in it; and it must be so fascinating, so interesting to every ear but your’s—’Tis a theme the very gods might look down from Olympus and envy me.

“ O,” cried Arabella, laughing, “ your flights are quite too high for Beechwood. You are apt to forget the proprieties of time and place. I dare say that speech went off amazingly well, about half past twelve last night, at Llangorwel.”

“ No, by the beard of my grandfather, there was little occasion for compliments

at

at that time. Miss Julia's taste is not so squeamish—Not merely words please her."

ARABELLA rang for breakfast; and soon after Maria made her appearance; and, as if by mere accident, placed herself at table between Berkley and her governess. "Pray, my dear," cried the latter, "change your seat: you will certainly catch cold if you sit so near the door."

"Pray sit still," said the Major, holding her hand: "this is only one of Miss Marshall's whims. Is it likely, is it possible, that the soft air of a May morning can be prejudicial to health. You have cooked up a complication of disorders for yourself, and are willing to make your pupil equally vapourish and fanciful."

“ So you attribute all my complaints to fancy and the vapours. Blest with a strong robust constitution yourself, you have no pity or consideration for those who are so unfortunate as to want that advantage. But I believe all this hardiness is affected. I am sure,” looking at him with all the softness she could assume, “ I am certain, if I could look into your bosom, I should there discover a feeling heart.”

“ FAITH, I make it a rule not to meet misfortune half way. If it comes, it comes; but I am soon confoundedly sick of it, and never rest till I have shaken it off; while you are never so happy as when you can pick up a little bit of sorrow to sit down and lament over. You, Miss Dorville, are not quite so much in the penferoso stile; you have not put down mirth in the catalogue of crying sins.”

VOL. I.

F

“ WHY,

“WHY, not three minutes ago,” replied Arabella, “you were yourself exclaiming loudly against it.”

“WILFUL misapprehension, I swear! Could you imagine I meant the same thing when I spoke of the roar of laughter last night, and the charming spriteliness of this morning? You may as well compare the disgusting grin of farce with the reviving smile of comedy.”

“WHAT a happy comparison!” exclaimed the governess. “You are really so entertaining, that I shall never be able to leave you to peruse my avocations in the library.”

“I KNOW not how to make a proper return to your compliment,” replied the Major, “without again borrowing the words of the sublime Milton: ‘with thee
conversing

conversing I forget all time, the seasons and their change."

"WHAT a charming memory you have!" cried Miss Marshall. "You seem to make every book your own on the first reading."

"OH, hang books! they may all perish in the bottom of the Red Sea for me. Who would lend his eyes to traverse their musty pages, while he can employ them upon such objects as these?" looking round with much animation. "May not the human face divine be justly denominated the book of life? O that the fair page I now contemplate," looking full at Arabella, "might be open before me! What is there of goodness and perfection that I could not learn from it!"

F

"Do

“ Do you mean to ride out this morning?” said Arabella, carelessly.

“ I DO, if you will suffer me to have the felicity of attending you. The weather is most inviting.”

“ I HAVE an engagement to day, and must beg your excuse for leaving you now.”

“ WELL, Madam, if you will go, tell me, at least, that you have had the goodness to revoke the cruel sentence of yesterday, that you will favour me with your hand on Wednesday night.”

“ I DO not know that I shall dance at all; but, however that may be, I have determined not to engage myself before I go.”

AFTER

AFTER pronouncing this cruel resolution, and coolly supping the remainder of her tea, she left the room, without discovering the slightest token of compassion for the poor disappointed Major, who sat silently biting his lips. Miss Marshall's eyes, full of resentment, followed her to the door; and when she was out of sight, turned, with a less than usual degree of sweetness, on Berkley; but, observing that he had taken up his hat, "You are not going to leave us I hope. I wish to shew you Miss Maria's last translation: do walk into the library."

"For a few minutes," coldly returned he; unwilling to disoblige, yet in no humour to flatter her.

"Come, come," cried she; "I have a vast deal to say to you; and one piece of intelligence to communicate, which, I
F 3 trust,

trust, will be agreeable to you. We are going to have a charming addition to our family. But I will tell you nothing here; so come with me;" and with the prettiest childish air imaginable, she took hold of his arm, and away they walked together.

As evening approached Maria began to grow extremely impatient; and, while Arabella and Miss Marshall were playing duets upon the harpsichord, she stood at the window, looking eagerly towards the road, and thinking every minute an age till her favourite arrived. At length the chaise appeared, and she hastened to meet her at the door. The moment she alighted, she seized her hand, and enquired, with much warmth, why she had not come sooner.

" LORD, my dear," cried Mrs. Harley,
" I have half fatigued and hurried myself
to

to death to come at all to night; besides highly offending Mrs. Bevan, with whom I came from Bath, and who expected me to stay at least a month at Cowbridge: but I determined to run all risks rather than disappoint you."

"How very good you are! and how much am I obliged to you! Nay, do not hurry into the drawing room. Arabella and Miss Marshall are engaged at the harpsichord; and my mother is so taken up in attending to them, that I am sure she did not observe my leaving the room. So, if you have no objection, we will take a walk, for a quarter of an hour, in the shrubbery, before your arrival is announced."

"With all my heart," cried the widow.
"I see absence has not altered you; you are as friendly, as unreserved as ever.

But how wonderfully you are grown, and improved in every respect! I always said you would make a much finer woman than your sister, but you exceed my warmest expectations."

"O, you are partial. Arabella is handsomer than you can imagine: there is such sweetness in her countenance!"

"BUT she wants your spirit and animation. Besides, I am sure you are the tallest, which is no small advantage. I would not say so much to Miss Dorville: she has so long carried off the palm of beauty wherever she appeared, that the idea of a superior would be mortifying to her."

"INDEED you mistake her character. I think she cannot help being conscious of her own loveliness; but I do not believe it
employs

employs her thoughts for a single moment after she leaves her toilet; and even when there, her mind seems generally occupied on some other subject."

"O, THAT is nothing but a piece of refined artifice: no woman can be insensible of her own perfections; and I should like your sister much better, if she would be more the child of nature, and drop so absurd a piece of affectation. But we all have faults, and she has a number of good qualities."

"SHE has, indeed," replied Maria. "You do not know half of them: but now we are on the subject of beauty, we are all likely to be eclipsed by a belle who has started up in this neighbourhood since you left it."

"AND pray who is that?"

F 5

MR.

“ MR. Courteney’s eldest daughter, who left school about a year ago, and was introduced in London, presented at court, &c. last winter.”

“ AND is it possible that the saucy, hoydenish, romping Julia, should be formed into any thing like a woman of fashion?”

“ I HAVE as yet seen but little of her since their return from town; but Arabella does not seem to think her very highly polished.”

“ I SHOULD wonder if she was, after the education she received. Her going to school was a mere pretence; for Lady Anne, who always doated upon her, kept her at home at least three fourths of the year, where she attended full as much to the conversation in the servants hall as to that in the drawing room; and it is hard
to

to say which did her the greatest injury; for if the first taught her vulgarity and assurance, the other made her insolent, and intolerably coquettish. It was really astonishing to see her, when hardly in her teens, laying out for admiration, and ready to burst with spleen, if she was not particularly noticed by the men. But she imbibed those ideas with her mother's milk. Lady Anne, to say the best of her, has been an intolerable flirt. She would never have married Mr. Courteney, notwithstanding her poverty, had not her character been too much hurt to leave her a hope of drawing in a man of her own rank."

"WELL," cried the simple Maria, "I never heard any thing of this before."

"O, SHE behaved intolerably after the earl's death, and lost both her fortune and reputation. Was not that the reason that

old Mr. Courteney would never consent to the marriage, and still refuses to give his son a shilling?"

"UPON what then do they at present live?"

"WHY, Mr. Thomas Courteney's mother was an heiress, and, at her death, Llangorwel, and about fourteen hundred pounds a year, came to him, and upon that small income they continue to maintain their large family. The old gentleman has four or five thousand a year; but every body thinks he will disinherit his eldest son in favour of the second, who is an artful man, and a great favourite with him. But let us leave the Courteneys, my dear Maria, and talk of persons we are more nearly interested about. How do you and your governess go on?"

"WHY

“ WHY just in the old way, evermore squabbling. She, indeed, always carries her point; but, thank heaven, my spirit is still unbroken; and I hope, with your assistance, to be able to manage pretty well this summer.”

“ O, NEVER doubt it. We'll teaze her very heart out. But tell me, have I my usual hold upon her? is she as fond as ever of my brother?”

“ FONDER, fonder every day. Indeed, I wonder how he bears it with patience, or treats her with civility. I often blush for her.”

“ I REJOICE to hear it. We'll make her blush for herself. Her fine olive complexion, you know, is changeable enough. But had we not better put an end to our walk? I assure you I do great violence to
my

my feelings by proposing it; but it will appear odd if we stay longer, and thy hear that I am come. I hope we shall hereafter have plenty of time for little comfortable *tête-a-têtes*, in which we may talk all matters over."

"I TRUST we shall," said Maria. "You may assure yourself of my entire confidence, which, though I love her dearly, I never could give to Arabella; for she never will enter into my schemes, and seeks rather to improve than indulge me."

"O, SHE is much too strict about trifles; quite cut out for an old maid. But hush; I must look as demure as herself now I approach the door, or I shall hurt your mother's nerves. Nay, my love, do not look serious. I respect every individual of your family from my very soul, and admire your sister extremely."

THEY

THEY soon after reached the house, and entering the drawing room, found the ladies in the same situation in which Maria had left them. The harpsichord was immediately shut up, and Mrs. Harley received in the politest manner. She made a number of particular enquiries respecting Mrs. Dorville's health, and was grieved to find it so indifferent: complimented Arabella upon the delicate freshness of her complexion; and thought Miss Marshall, who was, in truth, a mere skeleton, growing plump. She then began to make some enquiries respecting the neighbouring families, with whom she had been acquainted. The Lewises came in turn: "And pray," cried she, "are the amiable brother and sister at Abberhonvy still in *statu quo*? Has there yet been found no knight with a spirit sufficiently venturous to enable him to carry off that beautiful damsel?"

"I HAVE

"I HAVE not heard of any such person," replied Arabella.

"ALAS," rejoined the widow, "she has hung out the signal of attack, at the approach of every beau, for the last twenty years; but, if one may believe report, not one in all that time has ventured even a skirmish with her. But it is no wonder that the men keep aloof; she pushes so violently, that it would be dangerous to come within arm's length of her. Then the animal her brother—"

"You will at least allow him to be harmless," interrupted Arabella.

"O, THAT I readily grant you: but he is such a piece of still life, so eternally tagging on the heels of his sister, and repeating her words, that I can view him in no other light but that of her appendage."

"You

"You will have no objection, I hope," said Mrs. Dorville, "to accompany Arabella to a cotillion party at Abberhenvy to-morrow night."

"Far from it. I love cotillions of all things, and shall be delighted to see Miss Lewis practising the steps of the last century; there is nothing in nature half so diverting: but," turning to Maria, "do not you go? and you?" to Miss Marshall.

"Miss Lewis was rude enough not to include me in the invitation, which, indeed, I wonder Miss Dorville would accept; as it was given a full week after every other family in the neighbourhood had been engaged, for which the mistake of a servant was a poor excuse; but, as I do not go, she cannot expect Miss Maria."

"WHY,

"WHY, do you never separate?" cried Mrs. Harley. "She positively must come, if Mrs. Dorville has no objection. I know you will oblige me."

"So positive a refusal was given at the time," said Mrs. Dorville, "that I think it would be highly improper for her to go. She looks very pale, too; and, I am sure, is far from well; on which account it would be very imprudent."

"To the latter reason," replied Mrs. Harley, "I must submit; but I cannot think the former quite so urgent."

"SUPPOSE," said Arabella, "to avoid the danger of night air, and late hours, I was to accompany her home before supper. If Mrs. Harley would excuse us, the coach might return for her at any time she pleased."

"I HAVE

" I HAVE given you my decided opinion," replied Mrs. Dorville. " You may settle the matter as you think proper." Tears rushed into Maria's eyes, which had before been animated by hope; and giving Mrs. Harley an expressive look, she left the room. Miss Marshall, perfectly unmoved, enquired whether the Major was apprized of his sister's arrival; and being answered in the negative, instantly brought pen, ink, and paper, and begged Mrs. Harley would inform him of it with her own hand; declaring it would be cruel to keep him in ignorance of the pleasure he might enjoy. A note was accordingly written, in which Mrs. Dorville desired an invitation to supper might be included, and dispatched with all possible expedition to the Bank. Mean time Miss Marshall, in eager expectation of his coming, ran up stairs, loaded her hair with pink powder, and determined, though it began to rain,

rain, to take half a turn in the shrubbery, for a pretence to put on her cane bonnet, trimmed with primrose ribbon, which she thought became her infinitely, since the Major had hinted that he preferred it to Miss Dorville's straw hat. But, alas! armed as she was for conquest, elegant and interesting as she appeared in her own eyes, this was not to be the fortunate hour! The Major returned a polite answer, lamenting the happiness he was deprived of in not being able to attend the agreeable summons to the Park; but his friend, Sir George Brudenell, was just arrived at the Bank, and it was impossible to leave him at that time. He, however, consoled himself with the pleasing expectation of meeting them the next night, and introducing the Baronet to their acquaintance. "Sir George Brudenell!" cried Mrs. Harley. "I am quite charmed to find he is so near us; I did not suspect that he was one of William's

William's friends. Why, he is one of the richest, handsomest, and most accomplished young men in the kingdom. His father died when he was a child; and his mother, a daughter of Lord Northcote's, was said to have taken infinite pains in his education. I saw him about five years back, when he was attending her abroad, where she was obliged to go for her health, and he was the loveliest youth I ever beheld. He never left her from that time till her death, which happened about eight months ago."

" I THINK, cried Mrs. Dorville, " his attendance upon her for so many years, at his time of life, must have been a great interruption to his studies.

" O, BY no means," replied Mrs. Harley: " they always travelled with a large suite, in which tutor, governor, and I don't know

know how many scientific people were included. Lady Brudenell was seldom too ill to travel, though slowly; and she visited, with her son, every part of Italy, Germany, and France, that was deemed worth visiting. Many people wondered how an independent spirited young man could submit to the many restraints which her presence must of course impose upon him; but he never seemed to feel them; made her, as far as it was in his power, a sharer in all his pleasures; and never appeared so perfectly happy as when contributing to her felicity."

"A most extraordinary son, indeed!" said Arabella. "But pray how did you learn all these particulars? I would fain have them well authenticated for the honour of human nature."

"WHY,

WHY, I happened to be at Dover when he landed about three months ago; and my friend Mrs. Bevan, whom I went to meet, came over in the same packet with him. His tutor was her near relation, and told her all that you have heard, and a vast deal more, all in the panegyric stile; for he doats upon him. I wish I had known that he was intimate with my brother, Mr. Bevan should have introduced me to him, though it had been but for half an hour."

"WILL it not do equally well now?" said Arabella, smiling.

"OH, perhaps not. He has been in London among all the beauties, and may be a poor heartless wretch by this time."

"You have deep designs upon him, then, I find."

"O, NO;

“ O, no ; nothing but a little coquetry. There would be some amusement in flirting with such a fellow. But I don’t know what to do about my appearance to-morrow night ; I have not a single feather to wear. I came in such a hurry, that I forgot a thousand things : and will not a slight fatten dress look too heavy for this month, though the weather is a little cool ? Do advise me.”

“ I HAVE plenty of feathers,” replied Arabella, “ from which you may select as many as you please ; and if you think a gauze or crape train will make your gown appear more suited to the season, I have materials, and Johnson shall make it up for you.”

THESE offers were joyfully accepted, and a profusion of acknowledgments poured forth. But the artful widow could not help

help internally smiling at the simplicity of her companion, who could, with so much willingness, help to decorate a rival: for in that light she imagined every woman must behold one of her own sex and age, who was not downright ugly.

CHAPTER VII.

IN WHICH THE READER IS ENTERTAINED WITH
AN ACCOUNT OF WHAT PASSED AT
MISS LEWIS'S BALL;
WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF A NEW AND
INTERESTING CHARACTER.

ARABELLA had scarce opened her eyes the next morning, before Johnson informed her that Mrs. Harley had left her apartment, and enquired very anxiously how long it would be before she could see her. "But don't hurry yourself, dear Madam," added she; "for I know she only wants to talk to you about her

her dress, which we can compleat with great ease some hours before she will want it."

" I AM glad to hear it," cried Arabella. " Surely the certainty of that will make her easy. I will rise, however; and you may tell her that I shall be ready to receive her in my dressing room in half an hour."

BEFORE the time was quite expired, she entered. " I ought to make a thousand apologies, my dear Miss Dorville, for so early an intrusion; but I hope you will suffer the necessity of the case to plead my excuse. You told me that you had some small flowers which would suit the colour of my dress; and as I shall probably be some time in arranging them, I wish to be as expeditious as possible in beginning the work."

G 2

ARABELLA

ARABELLA put the flowers she enquired for immediately into her hands, and desired she would employ Johnson in any manner she thought proper.

"But at what time will she be wanting to dress you?" cried Mrs. Harley. "I must be cautious that my train does not interfere with so material a business."

"O, I shall dress at the usual time before dinner. I shall not want her for more than an hour; and all the rest of the day she is entirely at your disposal."

"Is it possible that you can be serious? Dress in an hour!"

"Nothing can be easier. As I never powder, and my hair curls naturally, very little dressing is required; and for the rest, a crape gown is put on as expeditiously as a muslin."

"Well,

“WELL, you are a happy creature to be so careless about these things. Your charming auburn hair is too beautiful to admit of artificial ornament, while I must sit two or three hours to be curled and powdered before mine will look tolerable. As you are so good as to offer it, I will take Mrs. Johnson into my dressing room immediately. Miss Maria’s maid and my own are there already, and only wait her direction to set them to work. I shall overlook the business myself. You can readily excuse my absence. You have reading, writing, and a thousand things to amuse you, while I can think of nothing but Sir George, and my new train.”

“Which you mean shall be the fatal means of his entanglement.”

“O, THAT I could be sure that it would!” eagerly replied Mrs. Harley.

“ But I am dreadfully afraid of those hazel eyes of your’s; they are too like his own. His complexion too, before he left England, was very little darker than your’s.”

“ Is it not a general opinion that people like their opposites?”

“ I CARE NOT for general opinion if this one particular man would enlist under my banners. But at what a rate do I talk! You will think me the greatest coquet in nature!”

“ No, believe me, I rather think you are seriously disposed for matrimony.”

“ O you satirical creature. I will not stay another moment with you. Adieu, adieu.”

ARABELLA

ARABELLA spent the whole morning, after her attendance on her mother, to whom she read about an hour, in the library, with Maria and her governess, endeavouring to cheer the spirits of the former, and reconcile her to her present disappointment; and, by a cheerful and animated conversation, to dissipate the spleen which generally hung upon the mind of the latter. She succeeded, in some degree, in both these attempts. A refined understanding, actuated by disinterested benevolence, will seldom entirely fail in the execution of its designs. Smiles again, though faintly, lighted Maria's countenance; and Miss Marshall promised not to object to her joining in the next gay party that should present itself. But, in reality, little merit could be allowed her for this concession: she was anxious to be permitted to make one herself, as the Major would of course be a constant at-

tendant; and it was impossible, in that case, to exclude her pupil.

MRS. Harley breakfasted up stairs; and it was not, without great difficulty, that she contrived to be ready by the dinner hour, which was four. Her dress was excessively full and showy; her hair in the very extreme of the mode, and loaded with powder. Indeed, it was necessary that the foundation should be substantial to support so mighty a fabric of feathers and flowers as were placed upon it. Her face was little less artificial than her dress: pearl powder and rouge formed the ground; and the soft touches of the pencil had assisted in arching the eye-brows, and delineating the veins. She had taken uncommon pains, and, in her own opinion, had succeeded wonderfully in these her ingenious labours. She thought she beheld a perfect Venus rise from the toilet;

let; and anticipated the consternation of poor Miss Dorville when she should perceive the contrast between their figures; for Johnson had informed her that her lady would be dressed in her usual simple stile. Full of these ideas, she exultingly descended the stair case; and the first object she beheld in the drawing room was Arabella, standing at a window, so entirely occupied by a book, which she was reading, that she did not perceive her entrance. She stood to survey her, and, at a first view, was pleased to find her dress what she called flat. That painted crape, thought she, ought to have been thrown over a petticoat of a fuller colour; the pale straw scarce shows it at all. To be sure the purple sash, and white plumes, tinged with the same colour, suit it tolerably. Her shape really looks fine; and that dress certainly makes her appear taller than usual. Her eyes turned towards a pier-

glafs, which happened to be oppofite to her.—Why, I look a mere pigmy to her!—Then viewing Arabella again, what a profufion of hair ſhe has! Sure a ſtranger can never believe it to be all her own! A ſigh at that inſtant eſcaped from the bottom of her heart; and Arabella turning, perceived, and came forward ſmiling, to congratulate her on the fatigues of the morning being at length ſo happily over. She wanted words to answer her. To what purpoſe have I toiled? thought ſhe, when I muſt accompany one who excels me in every thing. With what grace ſhe moves! and what mingled dignity and ſweetneſs diſplay themſelves in her countenance!

THE poor widow, full of theſe melancholy contemplations, ſcarce ſpoke during dinner. Envy rankled in her heart; and, as ſhe alternately beheld the lovely, unaffected

fects Arabella, and her own artificial figure, reflected by a malicious mirror, notwithstanding the powerful influence of self-love, she could not help feeling her own inferiority so forcibly, that, unable longer to conceal her chagrin, she complained of a sudden and violent head-ach, and, attended by the officious Miss Marshall, retired to her own apartment. Arabella attributed her indisposition to the anxiety and fatigue she had undergone in the morning, and really pitying her, went herself, as soon as the cloth was removed, to enquire how she did. The widow, to indulge her fretful humour, carried on the farce; and, at the moment she entered the dressing room, Miss Marshall was anxiously intreating her to nave her forehead and temples bathed with lavender water. But that would have been carrying the jest too far: the work of several hours was not to be undone in a moment; and had those

beautiful blue veins, which rose so near the surface, been unfortunately washed away, there would hardly have been time again to have traced out their meandering courses, before the hour of setting out for Abberhonvy arrived: for, though Arabella intrusted her to give up all thoughts of the visit, and declared her own perfect readiness to do the same, yet, reflecting that, if Sir George did not see this dangerous rival to night, he inevitably would to-morrow, and that, if full dress was an advantage, she possessed it in common with her, she resolved to go, and declared her full persuasion that the air and short ride would entirely relieve her. At six o'clock the coach was at the door, and they both stepped in, but with very different sensations. One was all ease and cheerfulness, while the other felt restless and uncomfortable, yet resolved to lose at once her head-ach, and the source of it, her ill humour, the
moment

moment they reached Abberhonvy, and to try the full power of those attractive smiles, which she resolved unsparingly to lavish upon the Baronet. Arabella introduced her, in the easiest and most graceful manner, to Miss Lewis, who recognized her old acquaintance with much politeness. The rooms were nearly full on their arrival: but the Major and his friend had not yet made their appearance. Lady Anne Courteney, and her daughter, came immediately up to Miss Dorville, and addressed her with great appearance of friendliness and intimacy; but stared full in Mrs. Harley's face, without seeming at all to remember her; though she had curtesied with some freedom at their first approach. "I fancy your Ladyship does not recollect Mrs. Harley," cried Arabella: "let me have the pleasure of introducing her to Miss Courteney, with whom she is, I believe, unacquainted."

A COLD

A cold recognition now necessarily took place; after which Lady Anne, turning to Miss Dorville, "You look delightfully to night, armed cap-a-pee for conquest."

"But who is there here worth conquering I should be glad to know?" interrupted Julia. "There is not a single man in the room worth dancing with, that I have yet seen; nothing but country 'squires, interspersed with a few parsons, and a stray red coat or two. I protest I almost wish that I had put on my old sattin gown; it would have looked very showy at a country hop like this."

"O fie, my dear!" cried her Ladyship, laughing, "you never should undervalue the present company: and there is nothing so vulgar as a full dress out of London;" viewing Mrs. Harley, from head to foot, with a contemptuous smile.

At

At that instant the Major and Sir George entered the room. The extreme gracefulness of his figure attracted all eyes.

"Who can that be?" cried Lady Anne. "I have certainly seen his face; yet I can't, for my life, recollect who he is?"

"A MAN of fashion, I am sure," said Miss Courteney; "yet I don't remember seeing him last winter in town. Do call Berkley here, and enquire his name. I shall be quite upon thorns till I know."

"I CAN satisfy you in that particular," said Arabella. "It is Sir George Brudenell. He is on a visit to Mr. Berkley."

"SIR George Brudenell!" returned my Lady; "is it possible? Why, I did not know

know that he was returned from the continent. I was well acquainted with his mother. How astonishingly he resembles her in face and person! I hope not in mind; for she was one of the greatest prudes I ever knew."

" THEN I am sure he is not like her," cried Julia; " for his countenance is all openness and spirit. With what animation he seems to speak! Lord, I long to be introduced to him!"

" THEN you are not sorry that you did not put on your old gown?" said Arabella, smiling. " You begin to think there is a man in the room worth dancing with?"

" To be sure I do," answered Miss Courteney. " Nay, I am positively quite smitten with him already."

MR.

MR. Courteney, and several other gentlemen, now came up. "Why, Lady Anne," cried he, "you so entirely engross Miss Dorville, that there is no getting a sight of her. I assure you it is a general complaint all over the room. Ah, Mrs. Harley! have we got you amongst us once again? I hope you are come for the summer, and that we shall very often see you at Llangorwel."

"You are very obliging," answered she, stiffly.

"I join in the request most cordially," said her Ladyship, with great condescension. "Mr. Berkley is one of our best neighbours, and I shall always be happy to entertain his sister."

WHILE the other gentlemen were chatting with Mrs. Harley, and the young ladies,

dies, Lady Anne called Mr. Courteney aside, and enquired whether he had yet been introduced to Sir George Brudenell? He answered in the negative; adding, that he did not even know that he was in the room.

“Go then immediately,” cried she, “to Berkley, whose friend he is. Get the ceremony over, and engage him as a partner for Julia. He is a man of great connections, and immense fortune; and I would not, for the world, that he should dance with any body else. He will certainly consider the proposal as a compliment.”

Mr. Courteney was hastening to comply with his lady's request, but the approach of the Major and his friend prevented him: Every heart fluttered as they drew near; yes, every heart; for even Arabella herself
lost

a part of her usual composure. The form of introduction over: Mrs. Harley, who was, of course, the last to whom the Baronet was presented, endeavoured to engage him in conversation, but Lady Anne, whose consciousness of her rank rendered all opposition from an inferior vain and fruitless, raised her voice so much as to force his attention. "Though personally unacquainted with you till now, Sir George, I have had the happiness of being well known to many of your family, and feel myself disposed already to consider you as an old acquaintance."

"You do me great honour, Madam."

The late Lady Brudenell was so exalted a character, that it almost appears a degree of vanity in me to say, that, for many years, we were united by the strictest bonds of friendship."

SIR

SIR George bowed; an involuntary sigh escaped him; "I have, more than once, heard my mother mention Lady Anne Courteney."

"How long," resumed she, "have you been in England? I hope you will look upon Llangorwel as your home while you stay in Glamorganhire. We have some things in our neighbourhood worth seeing; and Mr. Courteney and myself will be happy to point them out to you."

"If you are fond of field diversions," rejoined Mr. Courteney, "I have as capital a pack of harriers as any in the kingdom; and my pointers are as staunch as ever stood to a covey, as the Major here can witness."

"I AM far from a compleat sportsman," replied the Baronet; "though I have enjoyed

enjoyed the pleasures of the chase several times in the course of this spring. I have been so long absent from my native country, that I have almost the manner of living in it to learn."

"OH, rather instruct us," cried Miss Courteney, who longed to join in the conversation. "Surely the modes of France and Italy are far preferable to our savage customs!"

"IF I may venture to differ in opinion from so fair a lady," answered Sir George, "I should think not. Though I have spent the last five years abroad, I still retain a warm partiality for the manners, nay, almost for the prejudices, of my native land; and the character I aspire to, is that of an independant country gentleman."

"I HONOUR

"I HONOUR you for that sentiment," cried Mr. Courteney: "you will be an ornament to our fraternity; and I shall be proud to initiate you into the habits of the society."

WHILE the Courteneys thus engaged Sir George, the Major was endeavouring to prevail upon Arabella to promise him her hand for the first cotillion: but she felt a reluctance she could not account for; and declared her resolution not to dance at least till the second. He appeared disappointed; and Mrs. Harley told her, with a malicious smile, that it was not impossible to guess the cause of her idleness. Several other gentlemen applied to her, and, of course, received the same answer. "I think," whispered Berkley, "I may now safely compliment the lady of the house with an offer of my hand; for Mr. Courteney has just spoken to her, and

and is drawing on his gloves; and in case my surmise is true, you must positively permit me to sit by you, if not dance with you."

"You must do as you please," replied Arabella, "in that respect; and I only desire an equal degree of liberty myself."

THE Major then left her; and in a few minutes, Sir George and Mr. Courteney approached. "And who is the happy man," cried the latter, "that is to have Miss Dorville for a partner?"

"I do not intend dancing the first cotillion," answered she.

"But I trust your resolution extends no farther," replied he. "May I hope for the favour of your hand in the second?" She hesitatingly told him; that she

she was engaged to Mr. Berkley. "To the Major!" returned he with a significant smile; "Well, I can only say," turning to Mrs. Harley, "your brother is a fortunate fellow."

"I BELIEVE he esteems himself so," replied she. "No man can be more grateful for Miss Dorville's favours."

SIR George's enquiring eyes were full upon Arabella. She was confused, wishing to speak; but unable instantly to compose herself sufficiently for that purpose. Mrs. Harley saw that she was hurt; but, far from desiring to relieve her, "look," said she, "William is approaching with an air that speaks his satisfaction. I suppose I must resign my place; for you know you promised to indulge him with fitting next you during the first dance, and I see they are preparing to stand up."

"COME, Sir George," cried Mr. Courteney; Julia looks this way, and Miss Lewis expects me."

At the same time the gentleman who had engaged Mrs. Harley came to claim her promise, and they went to the dancing room together, leaving Arabella with the Major, who had just joined them. What an opinion must this charming stranger have formed of me! thought she. From the ill-timed raillery of Mr. Courteney, and Mrs. Harley's impertinence, he has every reason to believe me ridiculously partial to his friend. Nay, I myself have helped to strengthen the idea. If I had danced with Berkley there would have been nothing extraordinary in it; but to sit by him during the first, and be his partner in the second dance, and to remain silent when his sister threw out such plain insinuations, was absolutely to countenance

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them.

them. These vexatious ideas so entirely filled her mind, that she sat some time, without in the least recollecting her situation, or hearing a word of a fine flourishing speech which Berkley was addressing to her. She would, perhaps, have afforded him time to finish it, if Mr. Lewis had not joined them, and loudly expressed his surprize at Miss Dorville's not dancing. The Major looked thoroughly vexed at this interruption; but Arabella, recovering her presence of mind, felt relieved by it, and declining his invitations to play at whist or commerce, proposed adjoining to the dancing room. As they entered, she involuntarily looked for Sir George. His eyes too were turned towards the door. They met her's. She instantly, and with a blush, turned them away, and hurried to a seat. Berkley most officiously placed himself next her, and talked incessantly: but he was little heeded by Arabella, whose

whose thoughts were again engaged by the same disagreeable considerations which had disturbed them in the drawing room. Now and then she would steal a look at the Baronet, whose fine figure, and elegant stile of dancing, attracted universal admiration. Almost every lady in the room looked with an envious eye on Miss Courteney, who exulted in the manifest superiority of her partner to every other gentleman, and returned their glances even with more than her accustomed insolence.

At the end of the dance Sir George was going to lead his partner towards Lady Anne, who was seated at the upper end of the room; but she declared it was so intolerably hot, that she could bear no seat but on a vacant sofa near the door, where they placed themselves; and Julia, eager to engage his attention, did not wait for

him to begin the conversation. " You must think these country meetings excessively stupid, when you compare them to the delightful parties you have been accustomed to on the continent. I dare say we appear to you a mere set of awkward hoidens."

" Is it possible that Miss Courteney can imagine herself included under such a denomination?"

" WHY, perhaps, my vanity leads me to think myself an exception: at least your politeness will induce you to flatter me so far. But pray tell me what you think of the company in general?"

" I MIGHT more properly put that question to you; for I cannot yet be said even to know their faces. Come, give me your opinion of them."

" WELL,

“ WELL, I don’t care if I give you a sketch of those that have characters. Who shall I begin with? Lady Anne is a tempting object; and it would be droll to caricature one’s mother; but Miss Lewis will do still better; so she shall have the precedence. In the first place, then, all appearances to the contrary notwithstanding, she thinks herself a beauty, and, in spite of those frightful wrinkles, imagines people fancy her young. She would also be thought rich; though it is well known she spent her own little fortune long ago, and now imposes upon the good-nature of her silly brother to support her extravagance. She sets up for a wit too; and, because she stuns one with eternal noise, thinks herself very entertaining.”

“ I WILL charitably hope,” interrupted Sir George, “ that you have a long list of good qualities to balance against the disagreeable ones you have mentioned.”

“Not one, I assure you,” answered Julia. “Nay, the worst is yet to come. She is the most censorious of women: no creature alive has her good word: but the young and handsome are her particular aversion. You cannot conceive what comments she has made upon my conduct; but I despise and laugh at them all. What, indeed, can be more diverting, than the envious spite of a ridiculous old maid? To be sure, I have used her ill enough upon some occasions. She is fond of pushing herself every where, and last autumn came to Llangorwel, kindly intending to stay a fortnight; but we had several gentlemen with us from London, and we played her all the out-of-the-way tricks we could think of; and plagued her so heartily, that she went away in a pet before a week was out. I assure you we neither let her rest day or night; and were really so well amused, that we quite lamented

mented when she gave us the flip, and the chace was over. I vow you look quite grave, Sir George. Let me die if you do not pity the ancient damsel!"

" I NEVER perfectly enjoy a very dark picture. So, if you please, we will chuse a fairer figure for our next portrait. Suppose we take Miss Dorville? her countenance raises my expectations very high."

" O, SHE is too insipid for my pencil. She is handsome, indeed, and has what the grave ones call *good qualities*; but I must own I dislike her very much. She has no soul, no spirit; and is rather a restraint upon, than an addition to a party. We have so few people of fashion in the neighbourhood, that I should have been glad to have been upon intimate terms with her; but she is so grave and prudish, that I have given up all thoughts of that kind."

“AND pray of what kind are those good qualities which you say are attributed to her?”

“LORD! you’ll laugh at the very idea of them. She has established a school for all the brats in the parish, where they are taught to write, and read, and work, and all that; and when they are of a proper age, she puts them out apprentices or servants, forsooth, at her own expence, if the parents tell her they cannot afford it. Two or three times a week she goes to see how this elegant seminary goes on; and this, with visiting all the sick, lame, and blind, for five miles round, most agreeably occupies three fourths of her time.”

“AND is it possible,” cried the Baronet eagerly, “that so young, so charming a creature, can so employ herself?”

“LITERALLY

“ LITERALLY true, I assure you. She is quite run away with by this romantic benevolence, as it is called; and spends so large a part of her income in indulging it, that I should not be surprized if, when she comes of age, she should build an hospital, and endow it with all her fortune.”

“ A MOST uncommon turn of mind, indeed,” cried Sir George; and, after a pause, “ Is it not supposed that she is partial to my friend Berkley ?”

“ IT is difficult to say who she is partial to; but he certainly pays very close attendance at the Park, and her fortune would no doubt be very convenient to him. But you are wonderfully curious about her. I told you a description of her did not suit my talents; and yet you have drawn me in to tell you I don’t know how much stupid stuff about her.”

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“ You

“ You have been very obliging: but had we not better change our situation? the air grows too cold so near the door.”

He then led her up to Lady Anne; and, after chatting a few minutes, bowed, and, to their no small disappointment, left them without engaging Miss Courteney for the next cotillion. They had, soon after, the mortification of seeing him stand up with Mrs. Harley, whose countenance was, indeed, lighted up with smiles, and her feet scarce seemed to touch the ground; while the poor Julia, all vexation, scarce favoured Mr. Lewis, her unfortunate partner, with a civil word or look. As the room was too small to admit of more than one set dancing at a time, Arabella declined joining in the third cotillion, though Lady Anne condescended to solicit her in favour of Mr. Courteney; but as there were several ladies who had not yet had an opportunity

nity of standing up, her good-nature prompted her, on their account, to be steady in her refusal. Her scruples were laughed at by this true woman of fashion, who thought nothing more entertaining than mortifying the misses of inferior rank, which, as she said, "made them know themselves."

MRS. HARLEY experienced a most agreeable alteration in the behaviour of Lady Anne and her daughter, who, since the introduction of Sir George as her brother's guest, were altogether as polite and attentive to her, as they had been shy, and even insolent, before. Nor did she decline their friendly advances. Llangorwel was the gayest house in the neighbourhood; it was therefore desirable to her to be on such terms with its possessors as would gain her frequent admission into it.

SUPPER was announced almost immediately after the third cotillion, and passed pleasantly with all but poor Arabella, who felt very uneasy at being the object of Berkley's continued and pointed attention, yet knew not how to discourage him, otherwise than by behaving with perfect coldness and indifference, and that seemed not in the least to check his forwardness. So weary was she of his assiduities, that, when they rose from table, she readily promised to dance with Mr. Courteney for the remainder of the evening, in hopes, by that means, entirely to shake him off. But in this she was mistaken; for as soon as he heard the engagement made, he stepped to Sir George, and, in a low voice, told him, that, to humour Miss Dorville's very strict notions of politeness and propriety, he was going to do penance with the lady of the house, while she gave her hand to Mr. Courteney; but as they were fortunately

tunately to conclude with country dances, they might contrive to stand so near each other, that it would be almost the same as if they were partners. "Now prithee, Brudenell," concluded he, "don't laugh when you see me lead the venerable spinster up the room; rather bestow a few grains of pity upon a poor mortified dog, for such I shall then be."

"You need not fear my ridicule," replied the Baronet. "If I may judge from appearances, you are rather an object of envy." The Major shrugged up his shoulders, and, with a significant smile, left him, to intreat the honour of Miss Lewis's hand, which she bestowed with great apparent satisfaction.

LADY Anne Courteney observing that Sir George did not seem disposed to dance, endeavoured to prevail upon him to make
one

one in her party at whist; but he declined playing, and declared his resolution to amuse himself, for the remainder of the evening, with being a spectator of the dances. "That is exactly my own plan," cried Miss Courteney; "for I am so excessively fatigued with going through the last horrid cotillion, that I shall really be glad to rest. Will you join us, Mrs. Harley? Lord," continued she, in a loud whisper, "it will be infinitely amusing to see your brother go down the belle Catharine with his hobbling partner. Indeed, there is nothing I enjoy so much as seeing her dance."

"PRAY make an exception in favour of her brother," cried Mrs. Harley.

"I do, I do," replied Miss Courteney, laughing, as they entered the drawing room. "Now tell me truly, Sir George, did

did you ever, in the course of your travels, see any thing more diverting than the fight we now behold? I vow I would rather see Mr. Lewis dance than Vestris himself: why, he frisks exactly like a dry leaf before a November blast!"

"YOUR taste for the ridiculous," answered the Baronet, "is more animated than mine. While so charming a figure as Miss Dorville moves before me, I find it difficult to fix my attention on any less pleasing object."

"Do you think she dances well?"

"Is it possible such a question can be asked? Is she not grace itself?"

"I NEVER thought her so. On most occasions she is too inanimate; but when she dances she flies into the other extreme, absolutely

absolutely makes exercise of it, and looks as pleased as a country girl at a wake."

"NAY, now you go too far," cried Mrs. Harley: "she certainly dances finely; and, indeed, she ought; for she has had the advantage of the best masters, and has taken unwearied pains to improve herself."

"Ah," replied Sir George, "few instructions, and little trouble, can have been necessary where nature has done so much!"

"You are so warm in her commendations, that my brother will be almost inclined to be jealous!"

"I can only say," answered the Baronet, "he is a fortunate man if he has a right to be so."

"NAY,

"NAY, as to that," returned Mrs. Harley, "I only give into what seems to be the general opinion: I pretend to no particular information; for, though I am as intimate with her as any person in the world, I know very little more of her real sentiments on some points than you do."

"O, SHE is formality itself," cried Miss Courteney. "Well, you may look as incredulous as you please, Sir George, but you will find yourself deceived in this fancied piece of perfection: the sight of a grave face ought to set you on your guard; design lurks under it. Depend upon it there is a thousand times less harm in us mad girls, who say all, and sometimes a great deal more than we think."

"I most readily allow it," replied the Baronet. "The man must be insensible, indeed, who can behold Miss Dorville without feeling his danger."

POOR .

POOR Julia lost all patience; and rising, asked Mrs. Harley if she would walk into the other room, declaring she thought nothing so tiresome as sitting to see others dance. The widow looked at Sir George, and perceiving that he was not disposed to move, told her fair companion that she had promised Miss Dorville to wait there till she had finished the dance, which was then beginning, as she supposed it would be the last. Miss Courteney stood a moment irresolute, and then beckoning with her fan to a gentleman at a little distance, left the room with him, without speaking.

MRS. Harley was not sorry to see her depart; for she had hitherto sought in vain an opportunity of engrossing Sir George's attention entirely to herself. "Your admiration of Miss Dorville," cried she, "has, I believe, absolutely frightened Miss Courteney away, and in no very gracious humour.

humour. How could you be so rude as to entertain a lady with the commendations of her friend?"

"WHY, I believe it was a little injudicious," replied he, laughing, "considering the knowledge of her character which I have this evening had an opportunity of obtaining!"

"It requires no very deep investigation, indeed," answered Mrs. Harley, "to find her out; but that is, in my estimation, a pleasing part of her character: there is nothing so disagreeable, so unkind, as reserve in an intimate friend."

"CERTAINLY," replied Sir George, "where the heart and disposition are amiable, they cannot be too clearly manifested; and when otherwise, we are obliged to the openness of temper which renders concealment

concealment impossible: yet the peace and good order of society is sometimes promoted by the efforts which malice and ill-nature make to assume the appearance of their opposite virtues."

"POSSIBLY, it may," returned Mrs. Harley: "but I have so insurmountable an aversion to deceit in myself, that the slightest appearance of it in another disgusts me. Partially fond as I am of Miss Dorville, I cannot be blind to it in her. But I am, at this moment, giving you, perhaps, an improper proof of the unreservedness of my temper: I forget that I never knew you till to-day."

"AND why remember so chilling a circumstance?" replied he. "Be prevailed upon to ante-date the commencement of our acquaintance; and when we meet to-morrow, let us be old intimates."

"WITH

“ WITH all my heart,” cried she. “ I will note it down among my memorandums, that we have been acquainted these dozen years: you are a friend just returned from abroad; and I have your pardon to ask for not recollecting you.”

SIR George had only time to return a smiling bow to this obliging speech. A squeeze, if not a kiss, of her fair hand, would have been permitted, if it was not expected; but the approach of a party from the card room prevented all particular conversation between them, at that time, and, indeed, for the night; for the dance was soon after at an end; and when they had sat half an hour to chat and refresh themselves, the different families departed to their respective habitations.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONTAINS SOMETHING EQUALLY INTERESTING,
AND FULL AS NECESSARY TO BE READ,
AS THE LAST.

THE repose of Arabella was not so undisturbed as usual after her return from Abberhonvy. She felt what, to an ingenuous mind, must be the most painful of all sensations, a doubt with respect to the propriety of her own conduct. Yet, when she considered it over and over, she could scarce tell how it would have been possible for her to have acted otherwise; and at length concluded that her vexation principally

principally arose from the behaviour of the Major and his sister. This, in some degree, relieved, but was far from rendering her easy; for she saw that it would be impossible to avoid spending a large part of her time in their society for several ensuing months, which, if they persisted in their present conduct, must be equally painful and disadvantageous to her. She resolved, however, by the most determined reserve and coldness, to check Mr. Berkeley's freedoms, or at least manifest her entire disapprobation of them. To exclude him entirely from Beechwood, would have been difficult, if not impossible; for he had long been received as a friend: her father had lived for many years on terms of intimacy with him: he had, indeed, been the means of raising him to his present rank in the army; and his first coming into Glamorganshire had been at the request of Colonel Dorville, who, anxious

to settle as many of his friends as he could around him, offered him the Bank, a pleasant small habitation, with a little farm round it, on easy terms; inviting him, at the same time, to look upon the Park as his other home. Miss Marshall too, who had great influence with Mrs. Dorville, would be her strenuous opposer, and render it impossible for her to prevent his being, as usual, their very frequent visitor.

THE late hour at which Arabella had retired to rest, deprived her of her accustomed morning walk; but she was ready for her sister's time of breakfasting. Maria met her with a greater appearance of cheerfulness than she expected, after her late severe mortification. "Dear Bella," cried she, as she entered the room, "I bring you a thousand apologies from Mrs. Harley, for a liberty which she took last night. Will you
promise

promise to excuse it before I explain its nature?"

"WHAT is it, my dear?" replied Arabella, changing colour.

"NAY, no capital offence," answered Maria; "though between two ladies, and a beau in the case."

"PRAY tell me, Maria, without further trifling?"

"WHY I am quite amazed? Is it possible that *you* can be impatient about so small a matter? You know how dearly I love to teaze, and that anxious look strongly tempts me to indulge myself, especially as you so seldom give me an opportunity."

"THE liberties which Mrs. Harley allows herself," cried Arabella, "are generally of a kind so disagreeable to me, that I own myself apprehensive of any she may have taken in my name."

"LORD, you are so afraid of yourself. Your name was never mentioned; and, to keep you no longer in surprize, all she has done is to invite that great and surprising genius Mr. Lewis to breakfast here this morning."

"O, IF that is all," answered Arabella, greatly relieved, "she has my free pardon. I hope she is rising to receive him."

"SHE has been up a long time: I have been with her since seven o'clock, hearing a history of all your last night's adventures."

"AND

"AND pray, if it is an allowable question, what account has she given you? of what colour are her feelings on the occasion? She appeared greatly interested; but whether, upon the whole, pleased, or otherwise, I am really unable to determine, though we were together a large part of the evening."

"O, SHE is charmed, delighted with every thing, and every body. The Baronet was so polite and attentive, and the Courtenays so mortified, that they could not entirely attach him to themselves. You cannot conceive how I have been amused with her account of Miss Julia's disappointment, who, she declares, is dying for him. Nay, she believes every woman in the room, except yourself, in the same condition."

"I wonder how she came to make an exception in my favour, when she concluded all others saw with her eyes."

HERE the entrance of Mrs. Harley and Miss Marshall interrupted their conversation, and soon after Mr. Lewis made his appearance. "Well, I protest you are the most punctual man alive," cried Mrs. Harley. "I told you breakfast would be upon the table at nine, and you have not made us wait a minute. I suppose your horse has the marks of the spur about him for this."

"No, indeed," replied he. "I have never worn spurs since I had so dangerous a fall at Oxford: I was as near as possible to breaking my right arm: I dare say you heard of it: I was not able to write for five weeks after."

"PERHAPS,"

"PERHAPS," cried the widow, "it was a deliverance to some damsel, who, in that time, might have received a billet-doux that would have endangered her future felicity. Now confess, had not some fair one reason to bless the disaster?"

"No, upon my word. I never wrote to any woman in my life, except my sister, and to her as seldom as possible. Letter writing is the talent of the ladies; we men seldom pretend to any skill in it."

"O, you are too modest," replied Mrs. Harley. "I have heard your epistles spoke of as perfect models of eloquence."

"WELL," cried the simple Squire; "I can only say that your informers were too partial to me. To be sure, last summer a

few notes past between me and Miss Courteney."

"O, THAT is no discovery," said Miss Marshall. "I have heard Mr. Berkley talk of your attachment to Miss Julia."

"BUT, after her behaviour last night," cried Mrs. Harley, "I hope you have too much spirit to think of proceeding in the affair. There are a thousand women of fortune and talents superior to her's, who would think themselves happy in your attachment."

"You are very obliging, very kind, Madam," said Mr. Lewis, bowing. "I own, as you point out the lady's behaviour, in the light you place it, I confess it was not what I have a right to expect from her: I was angry at the time; but I shall have an explanation to day; for my sister
and

and I dine at Llangorwel, and are to meet your brother and Sir George Brudenell: we were invited in the most pressing manner last night."

"WELL, that is very extraordinary," replied Mrs. Harley. "Lady Anne is the most malicious woman upon earth, or we must have been included in the invitation. How excessively provoking! Nay, dear Miss Dorville, no arch looks: if you were so near a brother from whom you had been long divided, you would feel for me."

"AND such a brother too," added Miss Marshall. "Who, that knows him, can be insensible to his merits?"

"O," CRIED Arabella, "your concern is highly *natural*, and does not in the least surprize me."

"It is impossible to feel comfortably," cried the angry widow, "while there are such ill-natured people in the world. I do assure you, Mr. Lewis, you will find yourself much deceived in that family: they keep up an appearance of civility and friendliness while the darkest rancour lies at their hearts: but perhaps you are gone too far to recede with honour; if so, I should be sorry to injure them in your opinion; but I am as open as they are artful."

"I FEEL myself very much obliged to you, Madam," replied he, "for your good opinion, and kind caution, and shall certainly require an explanation of her last night's behaviour from Miss Courteney."

"WHAT an impenetrable!" whispered Mrs. Harley to Maria: "he is really too stupid

stupid to afford us the least diversion. But what say you to a walk? I am to be indulged with Miss Maria's company for the morning; and Miss Marshall of course disengaged: but we must go towards the Bank, or we shall perhaps miss my brother, who will probably be coming to see us."

Miss Marshall rose immediately, and, with the softest complacency, told her pupil she was entirely at her liberty for the day. Maria rang for their cloaks; and hastily finishing their breakfast, all prepared for going, except Arabella, who excused herself, as she found they meant to take the road to the Bank; and determined to employ the time of their absence with her mother, or in the library, where she had a variety of amusements always at hand.

THE morning was uncommonly fine, and the walking party set out in high spirits. Miss Marshall and Maria had each an arm of Mrs. Harley's; and Mr. Lewis most obligingly carried the little Romeo, for whom air, and gentle exercise, was judged necessary by his mistress, on account of a slight indisposition she had perceived in him the day before. At a small distance from the Bank, they were met by the Major and Sir George, who was introduced to the two ladies, whom he had not seen before. Both gentlemen made the usual enquiries respecting the health of their partners the preceding evening. "For me," answered Mrs. Harley, "my appearance at this early hour will inform you that I am perfectly recovered from my fatigue, and Miss Dorville appears as well."

"WHY,

“WHY, then,” said the Major, “would she deny us the happiness of seeing her this morning? for, by your near approach, I trust a friendly call was intended me.”

“O, you know how much she stands upon ceremony,” replied Mrs. Harley. “But don’t be cast down, dear William: let us be comfortably seated in your parlour, and I will prepare an expedient to make you easy.”

“INDEED,” cried Miss Marshall, “I am so much exhausted with the walk we have taken, which is a long one for me, that I shall be glad of rest, and a dish of coffee, for my head aches excessively.”

BERKLEY could do no less than offer her the support of his arm till they reached the house; and the happy governess’s weakness increased so much upon it, that

she could scarce prevail upon herself to move at all; and the patience of her supporter was nearly exhausted before the walk, short as it was, came to an end. They were scarce seated, and the coffee ordered, when the Major begged to hear the expedient his sister had promised to communicate, which she told him was, that he should take a walk to the Park immediately, which she knew was what Miss Dorville expected. Sir George looked surprized, and Miss Marshall almost pestered at the proposal; but the Major received it with a careless smile; and telling his friend that he must do the honours of his house in his absence, with a slight apology to the rest of the party, was preparing to go, when the resolute governess, determined not to be so disappointed, starting up, declared she had, till that moment, entirely forgotten a letter of the utmost consequence, which she must positively

tively write that morning; and, notwithstanding her dreadful head-ach, and extreme fatigue, she put on her cloak with the greatest alacrity, and, after giving her sweet Romeo an embrace, consigned him to the tender care of Mr. Lewis, and lamenting the necessity she was under to leave them, smiling bid them adieu. Mrs. Harley made some lively remarks upon the sudden and fortunate recollection of Miss Marshall, which seemed to divert all the party except the Baronet, who appeared thoughtful, and, notwithstanding all the efforts she made to amuse him, inattentive to what she said, except she mentioned Arabella, about whom she too plainly saw he was deeply interested. This confirmation of suspicions she had before conceived gave her a thousand pangs: not only as it threatened the frustration of her own hopes, but awakened the malignant passion of envy in her bosom, which
who

who ever has felt in any powerful degree, must allow capable of exciting sensations the most acutely painful. After some consideration, she resolved, at all events, to prevent the idea of a nearer connection with Arabella from gaining ground in the breast of Sir George; and giving Maria a hint to engage Mr. Lewis by a walk in the garden, during their absence, plainly told him that an engagement subsisted between Miss Dorville and her brother; though it was her whim that it should not be publicly known till she came of age; begging, at the same time, that he would not mention what he had heard, even to the Major, who held the will of his future bride sacred even in the minutest particular. "And who would not be proud of having an opportunity of showing his devotion to such a lady?" cried the Baronet, with a sigh.

"I ALLOW,"

“ I ALLOW,” said Mrs. Harley, “ that she has many accomplishments, and that William is, upon the whole, very fortunate; but she is not without defects, which, however, I do not mean to dwell upon, or display; but I don’t know how it is, I am strangely tempted to speak my whole mind when I converse with you.”

“ THAT is no more than I have a right to expect,” replied he, “ upon the score of our *old intimacy*; and I am a passionate admirer of that amiable openness of character which you seem to lament as a weakness. From the speaking eye, and sweet benevolent smile of Miss Dorville, I should have expected to have found it in her, more than in any other of her sex.”

“ I SHOULD be sorry to doubt your penetration, or skill in physiognomy,”
answered

answered she, " but in the present instance, I must say you have given no proof of either."

SIR George was silent, and looking half incredulous, the widow, fearing to alarm his suspicions by saying more at that time, dropped the subject, and proposed joining Maria and Mr. Lewis in the garden. They soon after set out towards Beechwood; and Sir George mentioned his intention of paying his respects to Mrs. Dorville and her daughter; but Berkley, who met them on the road, informed him that Arabella had just set out to accompany her mother in an airing: the three gentlemen, therefore, (for Mrs. Harley had in vain endeavoured to induce Mr. Lewis to break his engagement,) took their leave as soon as they had conducted them home.

THE

The officious particularity of the Major's visit had greatly offended Arabella. She was at her harpsichord when he entered; but instantly rising from it, could not be prevailed upon to indulge him with a single tune; referring him to Miss Marshall, who, if he was in the musical humour, would, she was sure, oblige him; and soon after, though he was disposed to talk at a great rate, and be very entertaining, she left him; and prevailing upon her mother to take an airing, ordered the carriage to be got ready immediately, and gladly accompanied her.

Poor Berkley was in a downright passion on seeing them set out, and near making a full discovery to the governess, when the eager solicitude of her looks checked his imprudence; and he recollected, in an instant, that her knowledge of his designs upon Arabella, would render

der her as violent an enemy, as she had been hitherto a zealous friend. By that means his interest, in the family, would be greatly lessened; and on unremitted attention and perseverance all his hopes depended. He therefore turned to Miss Marshall, and exclaimed against the whimsical tempers so universal in young women of fortune. "I swear," said he, "it is the most insufferable of all slaveries to be obliged to rack one's invention for compliments to please their insatiable vanity; and, after all, they think we are obliged to them for a patient hearing! By Jupiter, if ever I marry, and I believe it will be my fate to be noosed one day or other, I shall make a choice very different from what the world expects; it shall not be a woman who imagines herself a goddess, and wishes me to fall down and adore her. I cannot live whole days upon a smile! no," seizing the governess's hand
in

in affected rapture, "I am for reciprocity in love as well as politics.—What say you to my plan?"

"I THINK," said she, hesitating and blushing, "a mutual passion is necessary to secure felicity in the happiest of all states."

"I BELIEVE we think alike in most things," replied he, "however we may apparently differ: but as I have not yet sufficiently arranged my affairs to enable me to take that desperate leap which plunges us into the gulph of matrimony, I will trust myself no longer with you. Adieu;" squeezing her hand. "Say not a word of this conversation; for I would hereafter give the world something to wonder at."

He then left her as happy and as secure as if he had that morning taken her "for better or for worse."

ARABELLA'S

ARABELLA'S airing had entirely restored her usual harmony of spirits; and though informed that, at the instance of Miss Marshall, Mrs. Dorville had invited Sir George and the Major to spend the next day with them, felt not in the least displeased. She sincerely wished to avoid the latter; yet, as he was, at present, inseparable from his friend, felt no disinclination to permitting his visits, at least, till she could obtain an opportunity of convincing Sir George that she was not entangled in the manner she had reason to believe he imagined her. How deceitful are the first approaches of love! Arabella thought she was only solicitous to deceive the Baronet, from a regard to the purity of her own character. It was, in her opinion, unbecoming a woman of delicacy, to be supposed capable of an attachment to a man by no means unexceptionable in his morals, and uncommonly

monly free in his manners; and imagined all the anxiety she felt arose merely from her unwillingness that such an idea should prevail. But she was mistaken; her *heart* was concerned! The Major's affluities had long furnished the neighbourhood with a topic of animadversion, and she had occasionally been informed of it: but though she always discouraged reports of that kind, she never thought them of moment till now; they never made her uneasy till Sir George heard them. Short as their acquaintance had been, she felt that his good opinion was necessary to her happiness. Had she reflected upon this circumstance, it would have alarmed her; but totally ignorant of the mazes of the most intricate of all the passions, how should her simple, ingenuous heart suspect its near entanglement?"

CHAPTER VII.

WHEREIN THE AMIABLE PASSION IS SHEWN TO
HAVE TAKEN POSSESSION OF THE
HEART OF ARABELLA;
WITH OTHER IMPORTANT MATTERS WORTHY
THE READER'S PERUSAL.

IT was merely the force of habit which induced Arabella to visit her favourite dell the next morning; for her mind was so entirely occupied by what appeared of much more importance, that she viewed its improvements with an unusual indifference, and remained there little longer than was necessary to give the workmen some further directions, and encourage her
2 young

young labourers, by liberal commendation, and a promise of constant employment, if they continued equally industrious.

Soon after breakfast she went into the library, and was much concerned to find Maria and her governess on worse terms than ever. The former being more untractable, and impatient of controul, since the frequent opportunities she had enjoyed of benefitting by the advice of her friend and favourite; and Miss Marshall little inclined to allow her greater liberties than she had hitherto done, though often reminded of her recent promise so to do. Arabella, distressed to behold her sister so miserable, and certain that her temper must be ruined by such continual jarring and disagreement, resolved once more to prevail with her mother to interpose. But all her remonstrances and intreaties

were

were vain : she would not be persuaded to lay any blame on Miss Marshall, of whose principles and abilities she had a very high opinion ; and either was, or, as an excuse for her own indolence, pretended to be, fully convinced that Maria's difficulties were entirely the creatures of her own wayward imagination. Arabella was hurt, but not disappointed, by Mrs. Dorville's obstinacy ; for she had conceived small hopes from an experiment she had before repeatedly tried with the same ill success.

THE preparations which Mrs. Harley judged necessary for the reception of Sir George, occupied a large part of her morning, though she did not feel the degree of alacrity usual to her on such occasions. She saw the improbability of her ever attaching him to herself ; and though not wont to be easily discouraged, was almost ready to give up the pursuit, and try
to

to fix upon some more attainable object; the state of her finances loudly demanding the assistance of some man of fortune to recruit them, her annual income being totally insufficient for the maintenance of a woman of her spirit; and her brother having only a deeply encumbered estate to help out his commission, was unable even to afford her a temporary supply.

THE Major, in compliance with a summons from his sister, arrived at Beechwood a full hour before dinner time, and, by her orders, was shown into her dressing room. "You were surprized, I make no doubt, at the note I sent you this morning," cried she, as he entered; "but shut the door, and sit down: I want to have some serious conversation with you."

"You raise my expectations most agreeably: but, dear Lucy, if what you have to communicate is good and plea-

fant, what need of so much solemnity in the discussion of it? If the charming Arabella has made you her confidant, and confessed that all her distance and reserve has proceeded from excess of affection—You shake your head—Well, perhaps she has not gone quite so far—I'll thank you even for a glimmering of hope—Only assure me that a spark of love exists in her bosom, and by heaven I blow it up into a flame!”

“ Ah, William, it is in vain to flatter you—There is not a chance of your succeeding in your present pursuit.”

“ Not a chance! The gods forbid that I should think so! Cold, icy as she is, perseverance will surely subdue her. I hope you do not think I have a rival in Brudenell? that idea has given me several uneasy hours.”

“ I AM not quite certain as to that, for she does not honour me with her confidence; but it is plain she admires him;
and

and, considering your views, I think you were little better than a mad man to bring him into the neighbourhood!"

"O, you need not accuse me there. I should, indeed, have had reason to curse my own folly, if I had invited him; but his visit is merely *en passant* in the course of a tour through Wales; and if the officiousness of the Courteney's does not detain him, I hope to get rid of him in a few days."

"You may be sure they will endeavour to detain him: they even hope that he will carry off Miss Julia; but I have reason to believe him greatly taken with Miss Dorville."

"I SUSPECT it too," cried the Major; "though I have avoided all mention of her with him as much as possible; as I did not chuse to assert a direct falsehood; and he seemed once or twice inclined to question me very closely with respect to the terms I am upon with her. But I evaded

his enquiries in a manner which makes him imagine I am engaged, but not at liberty to own it; and this, as he is a man of the nicest honour, will, I hope, prevent his thinking of her in any other light than that of my intended wife."

"THAT was the very idea which struck me; and it can hardly fail of succeeding for a short time: but if there was no such person in existence as Sir George, I again repeat you could have no chance with Miss Dorville."

"UPON what grounds?" exclaimed the Major, rising in a passion.

"O," INTERRUPTED she, "I have too much reason to be assured of it. She yesterday mentioned the particularity of your behaviour in terms of such cool and determined disapprobation, that I can positively say you have not a hope left. But, if you will be advised by me, you will, perhaps, have little reason to lament your disappointment."

"IMPOSSIBLE!

“IMPOSSIBLE! I am absolutely ruined if I lose her. Was she not my sole inducement for settling here! Not my friendship for the father, but my designs upon his daughter and estate, brought me into Wales. By Jupiter, I would as soon have taken up my abode in Finland as in this cursed country, had it not been for the hope of securing her fortune, which, by the way, is more essential to my happiness than herself. What, think you, has such a fellow as I to do out of London? I was several times near hanging myself in the course of the last gloomy winter, and would hardly encounter another among these mountains for all the Beechwood estate. Yet, without some additional thousands, I am but ill provided for entering the world again with the *eclat* my ambition demands. Gods! have I paid such servile court to the mother, the daughters, the governess, and even her very lap dog, to give up all at last? 'Tis enough to drive one mad.”

“WELL, my good brother, when your passion subsides a little, perhaps you will condescend to hear what I have to propose. You used to say I was excellent at an expedient; nay, hear me silently. Suppose you transfer your devoirs to the younger sister? I think I can almost insure your success there; and as her fortune is the same, and her person nearly as handsome, I cannot conceive that any objection can be made.”

“WHY, if you are absolutely certain as to the impossibility of my succeeding with the elder, I see nothing that I can do better; for I freely own interest to be my chief object. The wife will always appear a pill to me; and there is little difference between one and another, so they are equally well gilded; and if you can point out the ready road to the heart of the giddy Maria, Sir George Brudenell, or any other man, may take her sentimental sister for me.”

“NAY,

“NAY,” cried the widow, “give *me* leave to speak there. I have a *penchant* for the Baronet myself, and, of course, do not wish him so speedily disposed of. Besides, it is necessary that you should keep up exactly the same appearances as usual, that none of the family may suspect your design; for a discovery would inevitably defeat it. I think I need not remind you that it will be necessary to proceed with spirit: it must be done at once, or not at all; for, though I think Maria may be hurried into a rash action by the violence of her temper, which, when provoked, she has no guard of, yet she has much good sense, and a strong attachment to her sister, which is the principal thing I am afraid of. All my address, and your rhetoric, will be necessary to avoid splitting upon that rock. What I chiefly depend upon is my influence over the governess, which I will use to render her confinement

absolutely intolerable. She must be a mere puppet in our hands."

"O, WOMAN! woman!" exclaimed the Major, "how wonderful are thy inventions! Here I, a poor honest, straight-forward blockhead, have beat and beat the bush, in hopes of rousing a shy bird, who would, fifty to one, have escaped me at last, while your superior genius points to the net, which is scarce spread before the flutterer is entangled. Dear creature, I could hug thee for thy contrivance."

"O, I'LL excuse your fondness: I expect something more substantial, as the reward of my services, when you are in possession of Maria's thousands."

"DEAR LUCY, you shall make your demand; and it must be high indeed, if I hesitate about complying with it. Yet I could almost be weak enough to lament the necessity I am under of giving up all hopes of Arabella: she is a charming, a far preferable woman!"

"SILLY,

“ SILLY, foolish man!—Have I not told you that she dislikes, despises, and seeks an opportunity of entirely discarding you? Drop all your ridiculous lamentations from this moment, and resolve to enter upon our new scheme with spirit; for I once more assure you, if we do any thing, it must be by expedition. I have now pointed out to you the certain road to fortune; pursue it, and prosper. Depend upon it, you may succeed if you will: but a minute must not be lost: this very day you must begin the attack.”

“ THIS day! this hour! this moment!” cried the Major, in a rapture. “ A week shall carry us to Gretna-Green: the summer shall be whirled away at some of the fashionable lounging places; and London, *London* shall succeed; where I will enjoy, to its full extent, every wish of my heart.”

“ WELL, well, moderate your transports, my good brother. Prudence is as necessary as fire to good generalship.

Come, compose your countenance, and walk down stairs.—That was well done.—You are under compleat discipline, I see, which is an omen of success to me, your commander. Go down; for Brudenell is, by this time, arrived. Ah, sweet fellow! if I was as secure of him as you are of Maria!—But that's a vain wish. I will take care that you shall have an opportunity of speaking aside to your enamorado before night."

"AND you may depend upon me for making the proper use of it.—

"None ever had so strange an art

"His passion to convey

"Into the list'ning virgin's heart,

"And steal her soul away;—"

gayley sang the Major, as he quitted his sister's apartment, elated with the hope of speedy fortune; which, sanguine as his temper was, Arabella's determined coldness had, though he was unwilling to own it even to himself, nearly banished
from

from his bosom. As he descended the stairs, Sir George entered the hall, and asked him, with a forced smile, whether he had been enjoying a *tête-a-tête*.

“ I HAVE,” replied Berkley, “ with a fair lady in her dressing room.—But say nothing of it in the parlour: mothers sometimes look cross on these occasions; and one would not irritate them till one can do it to some purpose.”

THE Baronet made no answer; but entering with him the room where Mrs. Dorville, Maria, and her governess were sitting, payed his compliments in a manner less easy and graceful than was natural to him; for the absence of Arabella left him no room to doubt of Berkley's having been with her; and every circumstance that served to confirm the idea of their attachment, gave him a pain which he feared to ask himself the cause of. The widow and Miss Dorville soon after came in; and dinner passed not in the hum drum

way usual to small parties in the country, who meet for the sake of a pleasant ride or walk, and have little or nothing to say, till the appearance of the desert gives them an opportunity of descanting upon the productions of their several gardens, hot-houses, &c. Sir George had an inexhaustible fund of ideas, drawn from an accurate observation of the present age, and a deep investigation, through the medium of the best authors, into those that are past. He was able to give information, under the pleasing mask of entertainment, to most of those with whom he conversed. Not that he wished to engross more than a moderate share of the conversation: he was fonder of drawing out the talents of others, than of displaying his own; yet they were a never failing resource whenever he chose to call them; and it was impossible for dullness or ill-humour to invade the society of which he was a member. Every hour that he spent with Arabella,

bella, his admiration of her increased: her animated conversation fully answered the high expectations which the intelligent sparkling of her eye had raised: her sentiments, her opinions, her taste, so exactly corresponded with his own, that they seemed to be informed by the same spirit. What delicious draughts of the enchanting passion did this amiable pair, unconsciously to either, take from each other! The rest of the world seemed to disappear from before them: they felt, in all its force, that delightful sympathy by which congenial souls are so powerfully attracted; and a summer's day passed, in their estimation, as a moment.

MRS. Dorville had withdrawn immediately after tea, to take an airing, attended, as was frequently her desire, by her woman; and the rest of the party agreed to walk round the pleasure grounds, which were of considerable extent. The widow, now principally attentive to the wishes

wishes of her brother, engaged Miss Marshall in a serious conversation, of which he and his affairs being the subject, she found it no difficult matter to interest her very deeply. Sir George, as she had foreseen, offered his arm to the happy Arabella, who never formed a perfect idea of felicity before; and the Major, of course, escorted Maria. This was a charming opportunity for him to open his batteries; and he began by telling her how much he rejoiced to learn from his sister, that the unreasonable austerity of her governess was at length relaxed, and that she was, in future, to be left to the guidance of her own good sense, which every one, but Miss Marshall, had long since perceived was fully equal to conducting her with perfect propriety. "And pray," cried Maria, "how long is it since Mrs. Harley gave you this piece of information? It must surely be of very recent date; for the alteration is entirely new to me."

"NEW!"

"New!" replied he. "You astonish me. I thought an entire abolition of all restraint was to have taken place, and perfect liberty and independance have been secured to you, on the day of Lucy's arrival!"

"SOMETHING of that kind was talked of; but my hopes and expectations are so far from being answered, that I am, if possible, a more compleat slave than ever. O, I had such a lecture this morning!— But I forget that I am speaking to her friend and favourite. Perhaps I may suffer for my imprudence."

"Stop, stop, I beseech you," interrupted he eagerly: "harbour not such unjust, such cruel suspicions; I renounce both appellations from my very soul. I did, indeed, respect, and was willing to befriend her to the utmost of my power, in grateful remembrance of her worthy father; but her most injurious treatment
of

of the most beautiful and amiable of her sex, has rendered her my aversion."

"NAY, Major, I shall cry stop in my turn: these fine compliments encroach upon the rights of Arabella."

"AH! Madam," gently pressing her hand, "how entirely have you mistaken my real sentiments! If I have hitherto paid more constant and marked attention to Miss Dorville than to her younger sister, it was only that the Argus, who guarded the fair Maria, of whose ridiculous passion I could not be ignorant, might not be still more envious of, and enraged against, her. I knew the power she had over your comfort and ease, and feared to give her an additional and powerful motive to the cruel exercise of it."

"WELL, Sir, I am obliged to your intentions; but you robbed me of a delightful opportunity of retaliation, which I really think would have made me ample amends for her increased severity."

"CHARMING

“CHARMING vivacity!” cried he: may it never find a check. Set this malicious woman at defiance; assert your natural independance, and be ruled by her no longer.”

“O, I AM well inclined to take your advice; but I am bound by the cruel chain of necessity; and the more I struggle, the more it pains me.”

“BREAK it,” cried he, with warmth: then, in a softer voice, “O that you would permit me to set you free? You see before you a man above deceit and artifice. He is sensible that his fortune, though by no means contemptible, is not such as will, to the interested part of the world, justify your acceptance of him; but his family and connections are unexceptionable; his expectations very considerable; and his heart, his soul, his future life, devoted to you, if you will only condescend to accept them. I am sensible of my own unworthiness. What man can be otherwise,
when

when he addresses you? You are silent; you look surpris'd! I own this declaration has been precipitate, perhaps ill-timed: perhaps my unguarded warmth has displeas'd you; but I know your generous candour will make allowances for a temper like mine, heated by the knowledge of her distress, who is the object of my most passionate regard."

"You have, indeed, surpris'd me," replied Maria, hesitating. "I have so often been a witness to your nearly similar declarations to my sister, that I can scarce persuade myself that you are speaking to me.—Pray open your eyes, and you will perceive your mistake."

"DEAREST Madam, the error has hitherto been your's. I have acted a part, and you were deceived by it; but now I throw aside, for ever, a mask so foreign to my nature, and my whole heart is open before you. Let that sweet averted eye be turned upon me with favour, and we may

may both be happy. Fly from cruel bondage to perfect freedom; let the pangs, which your barbarous persecutor has given to you, recoil with tenfold violence on her malicious self."

"You know, Sir, I am not at my own disposal. Miss Marshall is to command me for two years to come; and it is five before I shall be of age."

"FIVE years! chill not my soul with the mention of so dreadful a period. Can that delicate frame contend with continual mortification, contradiction, and confinement, for so long a time! No; I am well assured you would, in a much shorter time, fall a victim to your triumphant rival: for such she must soon commence, as I shall now find it utterly impossible longer to deceive her."

"WHY, to own the truth, I am much of your opinion in that particular: I believe nature did not design me to endure very long; and my father, by his ill-timed care

care for me, has probably lessened the short term she intended me."

"O, do not drive me to distraction, charming Maria! Shall the world be deprived of its chief ornament, and I of all that my soul holds dear, for want of one effort? Only resolve to be free, all difficulties shall vanish; and she who now exults over you, shall be left in a state of the lowest despondency. Most amiable, most charming of women, let me persuade you."

"Do not tease me any more at present," interrupted she. "Perhaps I may consult Arabella."

"HEAVEN forbid that you should mention it to her; that would be instant destruction to all my hopes. I well know the rigidity of her principles; she would sacrifice even life to a punctilio. Why should a superior understanding, like your's, ask advice from another, to assist its determinations? I beseech you to let
my

my cause be pleaded only at the tribunal of your own fair bosom; there let me stand or fall; but remember my life depends upon your resolves."

"WHY, this is a higher flight than ever I heard you treat my sister with: you are a perfect Oroondatis! But I tell you, once more, not to teaze me. The continuance of any one subject long together is what I cannot endure; try if you can find one a little more entertaining."

"PARDON me for a moment, dearest Madam: only assure me that you will not mention what I have said to Miss Dorville, and I will endeavour to obey you."

"I HATE assurances and promises, so expect none from me. I shall act just as my humour prompts me: but remember, I will not exchange one tyrant for another. Now pray attend to my injunctions; I am in a very stupid way, and want to be amused."

THE Major had obtained as much as he could reasonably expect from his first
2 declaration,

declaration, which so effectually assisted his natural flow of spirits, that he found no difficulty in giving his companion the entertainment she desired. Had she possessed a great share of penetration, his extreme gaiety, after so recent a discovery of his passion, would have displeased her. But is a knowledge of mankind to be expected at her age? Can the simplicity of sixteen cope with the artifice of six-and-thirty? Alas! poor Maria, thou art playing with the net which is intended to entangle thee: every smile which dimples thy soft cheek, is interpreted, by thy designing lover, as an omen of his speedy success; and while thou art listening to his lively sallies, and pointed ridicule on all whom thy levity induceth thee to dislike, he is, in the inmost recesses of his soul, intent only on the thousands which he shall obtain by thy credulity.

If the walk did not appear long to Mr. Berkley and Maria, what an instant was it to the Baronet and her sister! A thousand
times

times was Sir George upon the point of expressing his admiration, his passion (for he could no longer conceal from himself the nature of his emotions) to the lovely object of it; but the idea of her engagements to his friend as often checked him, and the half uttered words expired before they reached her. When they arrived at that spot which has been before mentioned, where, under an ancient oak, a seat had been placed by the late Colonel, they stopt; and Arabella could not resist the inclination she felt to speak of, to praise her father. A sweet langour took possession of her features; and, as she dwelt upon his virtues, his affection, and her loss, a tear of tender sensibility stole from her eye. What were the sensations of Sir George at that moment! O, gentlest Arabella—he would have said—that thou wouldest suffer me to supply the place of him whom thou hast lost; that thou wouldest own me as thy support, thy faithful guide through
life;

life; what bliss, what exquisite felicity would it be, to supply, to thy feeling heart, all the happiness thou couldst derive from father, friend, and husband!

THE evening began to close as they came within sight of the house; Mrs. Harley and Miss Marshall leading the way, or they had probably not reached it so soon. The former was not perfectly pleased with Sir George's long *tête-a-tête* with Arabella; but, in consideration of her brother's interest, she, for once, waved her own, and exerted all her address to amuse the governess, that she might not be tempted to interrupt a conversation from which she hoped so much. Mr. Courteney's coach standing before the door, informed them of the unexpected arrival of that family. Mrs. Dorville had found them in the drawing room at her return from airing; and they were at tea when the walking party entered. Mr. Courteney met them at the door, and taking Arabella's hand,

“ How

"How does the blooming complexion of Miss Dorville recommend exercise and early hours!—Ah, Julia! your *rouge* looks pale to this."

"You seem to understand, Sir," replied his daughter, "that a compliment is never thoroughly enjoyed by one woman, unless given at the expence of another."

"That cannot surely," cried Sir George, "be the case in the present company: where each has so large a share, no one can wish to diminish that of another."

"FAITH, the ladies must settle that point among themselves," replied Mr. Courteney; "but if I may judge from my own family, they are mere mortals as well as we; and I would as soon allow a preference to be given to Lewis's hounds before my own, as Julia would own this lady's superiority in beauty."

"For shame," cried Lady Anne. "These are not subjects to be discussed in so rough a manner: pray give us no

more horrid comparisons between your daughter and your dogs."

"NAY, you wrong me," answered he. "I compared Julia's feelings with my own: I am as fond of my dogs as she can be of her beauty; and will venture to assert, even in this company, that one is capable of giving as much pleasure as the other."

"TREASON! treason!" exclaimed the Major. "Let us all enter our protests against such seditious opinions: What say you, Sir George?"

"I VOTE decidedly against the assertion," replied the Baronet, "as false, libellous, and highly derogatory to the dignity of the sex, whose prerogatives we are bound in honour most sacredly to protect."

"So I find you batchelors are on the other side of the question; but, take my word for it, you'll all be glad to join in the opposition hereafter, when woeful experience

perience has taught you the difficulty of submitting to despotic sway."

"I thought," said the Baronet, "it was a received opinion, that, if a sovereign, in every respect what the people could wish, were placed upon the throne, his power could not be too extensive; and if that be admitted, who in the present company will argue against absolute power?"

"But an elective monarchy," replied Mr. Courteney, "does not always secure the happiness of the subject. What say you, Lewis? The ladies have a right to your opinion on so interesting a subject?"

"Why, if I might be permitted to chuse my ruler," hesitated he,—

"You would swear absolute submission," cried Miss Courteney: "But, good man, if you know your own interest, you will take my advice, and chuse a *king log*. Take my word for it, any thing that possesses more animation will break your poor heart."

“AND if you will hearken to me,” added the Major, “you will, of all things, beware of a wit; a good, honest country gentleman can never accommodate himself to the various humours of so whimsical a being.”

TEA being now over, part of the company sat down to whist; and the rest amused themselves with conversing in small parties, in various parts of the room. Sir George hoped to have engaged Arabella to renew the conversation which had by each been suspended, with much reluctance, at the end of their walk; and she would have been but too happy in recalling sensations the most delicious she had ever experienced; but the malicious Julia would not quit them for a moment; and Arabella was too polite to let her perceive that her presence was irksome to her. Maria, in the mean time, quitting Mr. Courteney, with whom she had been chatting, seated herself at the further end of the
room;

room; and Berkley, ever attentive to the furtherance of his scheme, followed her, intending to alarm and pique the governess, who had placed a chair near his, and hoped to have engaged him in a tender *tête-a-tête*.

"CHARMING Maria!" cried he, as he seated himself by her, "indulge me with a few minutes conversation. Have you condescended to think of what I this evening mentioned to you; may I flatter myself with a ray of hope?"

"ARE you mad?" replied she, "to think of speaking to me before Miss Marshall! Her eyes are upon us at this instant, and she will be here before many minutes are over."

"You then," returned he, "shall regulate my behaviour to her: shall I be civil or rude?"

"O, RUDE, abominably rude. I will have present pleasure, if I suffer for it hereafter."

SHE had scarce done speaking, when the

governess advanced towards them; and, with an affected smile, addressing the Major, "what destroyers of conversation are cards! and how judicious were you in withdrawing from the vicinity of the table, where I was stupidly sitting, without recollecting that I had power to move!"

"FAITH," replied the Major, "I fled, not *from* the cards, but *to* the lady: the attractive power of the one was so great, that I was insensible of the repulsion of the other."

"You love to give unaccountable reasons for what you do," answered she: "from any other man I should have called your speech a rude one; but I am so accustomed to raillery from you."

"You mistake me entirely," replied he, gravely; "I never was more serious in my life. Have a little compassion, dear Madam," turning to Maria; "revive my drooping spirits with a few sweet words, or I shall expire with *envi*."

"IF

“ If that lady had possessed the power of reviving you, I suppose your spirits would have been in their highest meridian after your long *tête-a-tête* with her this evening. You would call me malicious, or I would say Sir George had engrossed your favourite, and put you out of humour.”

“ HEAVEN and earth, Miss Marshall, your conversation this evening is quite petrefying. Charming Maria, open those rosy lips, and administer a never failing cordial.”

MARIA laughed, and was going to speak; but her governess, whose colour rose every instant, prevented her. “ This is too ridiculous. If I was not well acquainted with your real sentiments; if it was possible for me to be offended with you ”—

O, THAT it were possible for you to let me rest!—Vain wish!—Woman, woman, source of all our pain and pleasure,” looking most distinguishingly on each, “ this

world would be purgatory without, and with thee it is madness. O, that one part of the female world were shut up in convents, that the charming, the irresistible remainder might be at liberty to be happy, and confer extatic bliss on us their humble adorers!"

MARIA changed colour, and gave the Major a look at once expressive of pleasure and apprehension; and he, willing to compleat her triumph, seized Miss Marshall's hand, as she sat swelling with passion, and sang in a low, but animated, voice,

" If I for Maria die,

" Deaf to poor Eliza's cries;

" Ask me not the reason why;

" Seek the riddle in the skies.

Maria rose up in a real fright; and Miss Marshall, in a fury, was preparing to follow her; but a supplicating look from Berkley induced her to stop. " And why all this anger, I beseech you, good Madam!" cried he: "you know my humour,
and

and used to say it was amusing: at all events it is out of my power to curb it; and I can never think of connecting myself with any woman, however partial I may be to her, that will not indulge it freely."

"PARDON me, dear Major; but I was really piqued to be made the sport of my pupil, a mere child."

"THAT she was a child should have made you easy, as in her you could not rationally fear a rival."

He had now gained his point in pacifying the governess with respect to himself; all that remained was to irritate her still further against Maria. "But though your pupil is young," cried he, "she is full of life and fire, and has no aversion to a little coquetry. Sir George seems quite fascinated by her sister: and poor Lewis is so stupid, that I believe I must have a little chat with her after supper, in mere compassion, if her mother does not hurry her away, as is sometimes the case."

THIS hint was not lost upon Miss Marshall, who, the moment the rubber was over, drew Mrs. Dörville aside, and telling her that her youngest daughter looked very ill, and seemed much fatigued after her walk, obtained a promise from her to require her attendance when she retired for the night, which was always immediately after the cloth was drawn.

MARIA instantly recovered from her fright, on perceiving the power which a few words from Berkley had in smoothing the angry countenance of Miss Marshall; and determined not to be sparing of provocation in future, as, if matters went a little too far, she could at any time command his assistance: for she imagined that he would always be happy to contribute to her amusement, which was her present object; and she could consider of his further views at her leisure. A summons to supper interrupted these pleasant contemplations. The Major placed himself

next her at table, and chatted in so lively a stile, as to animate her spirits to their highest pitch. Knowing she was passionately fond of dancing, he talked about the possibility of having a cotillion that evening. She took the hint in an instant, and said, if it was agreeable to the company, there could not be the least difficulty, as the harper, who was then playing, often indulged them with a country dance, and two of the other servants played on the violin. The proposal was well received by the whole party; and Mr. Courteney, directed by a look from his lady, took Arabella's hand, and begged once more to have the honour of being her partner. Her eyes involuntarily turned towards Sir George, but meeting his, were instantly cast down; and a bright crimson diffused itself for a moment over her lovely face. Lady Anne took advantage of her silence: "I vow," cried she, "the plan of this dance was laid between Miss Dorville

and the Major before supper, and she is already engaged; but," softening her voice, "why should the discovery occasion a blush so deep?"

"You are strangely deceived, Madam," replied Arabella, with some warmth, "if you imagine I lay plans with Mr. Berkley, in preference to any other of the present company, or the rest of my neighbours and acquaintance."

LADY Anne looked towards Mrs. Dorville; and appearing to recollect herself, "Pardon me, dear Miss Dorville," cried she; "I meant only a little innocent railery, and was far from imagining you would have taken it in a serious light; but you very prudent ladies are so soon alarmed!"

"I AM most unfortunate," said the Major, "to have been the means of banishing a smile from the countenance of that lady for a single minute—"

"WHAT stuff is this!" cried Miss Courteney. "For heaven's sake let us have

have none of thy aukward grief, and sorrow, and all that: if thou wouldest not vapour the whole company, prithee go and see if the harp and fiddles are in tune, that we may lose no time."

"AN excellent propofal," faid Sir George, who feemed to recover from a momentary thoughtfulness. " Let our horizon be clear to night, though clouds should to-morrow obfcure its brightness. May I hope," turning to Maria, " for the pleasure of your hand this evening?" A fmiling affent was half pronounced when her watchful Argus appeared. " Your mother, Mifs Maria, intreats your attendance to night. I would have fupplied your place, knowing your paffion for dancing; but fhe thinks, after having been already too much fatigued by a long walk, a further degree of exercife would be highly prejudicial to you. Your eyes feem to refer me to your fifter; but Mrs. Dorville has already refufed her request for your indulgence;

dulgence; and it will be highly absurd and childish in you, to attempt resistance against her orders."

"THIS is intolerable," cried Maria, "You supply my place! Yes, I well know how greatly I am indebted to your kind offices. Heavens! what a child, what an infant do you make me! You did not guess, Sir George, that your purposed partner still wears her leading strings. O, they are *fetters*, *chains*!—But I only expose myself.—Your commission, Madam, is over, I suppose. I will only speak to Arabella, and then follow my mother."

SHE then curtesied to the Baronet; and, after exchanging a few words with her sister, who seemed greatly hurt, with eyes full, and a heart half bursting, left the room.

IF the gratification of malice can ever be said to convey pleasure, the extreme mortification of her pupil certainly gave a high degree of it to Miss Marshall. Mrs. Harley, too, who had silently watched the progress

progreſs of the whole affair, augured from it the entire completion of her brother's wiſhes, in which a material part of her own were included, and could ſcarce conceal her joy. When he entered the room, and informed Miſs Courteney that her orders were obeyed, and all things in readineſs, ſhe aroſe with a childiſh degree of alacrity, and, half running acroſs the room to Mr. Lewis, who was vacantly gazing upon the picture of the late Colonel, laid her hand upon his arm, with a quickneſs that made him almoſt ſpring from the ground; then burſting into a loud laugh, at his ſurprize, exclaimed “ Well, if I have the power of animating you to ſo wonderful a degree, I will poſitively have you for a partner in the firſt dance— What ſay you?”

SHE gave him time only to answer by a bow; and, as they walked along, reſumed, in a lower tone of voice, “ nay, you may well be grateful; for if I had not taken
pity

pity upon you, the governess had inevitably fallen to your share."

THOUGH Lady Anne Courteney never danced herself, she was a great promoter of that exercise among the young people, and particularly at this time, as it displayed her daughter's fine person to great advantage; an object of greater importance than ever since the arrival of Sir George, who she resolved should not escape her, if every effort within the power of herself and her family could prevent it. She had already engaged him to spend some time at Llangorwel before he left the neighbourhood; and had prepared Julia to open such a battery of ogles, languishments, sighs, and smiles, (for she determined to attack on every side,) that she reasonably concluded, if he was not like Moor of Moor-hall, armed at all points, it would be impossible for him to resist it.

THE dances went on most agreeably with all but Arabella, whose feelings had been

so

so much hurt by the disappointment of her sister, that she was unable to reassume her usual degree of vivacity during the whole evening. Lady Anne did not fail to take advantage of her gravity, by observing to the Baronet, how greatly she was concerned at the unfortunate hint of her partiality to Berkley, which she had dropt before Mrs. Dorville, her affected coolness to the Major, and evident dejection of spirits, proving how much it had alarmed her.

“OUR little party did not separate till it was very late. Mr. Courteney had, between the dances, helped himself most unsparingly to his favourite liquor claret, which he said was the only thing in the world to allay heat; and, by degrees, he became so unmanageable, that it was with no small difficulty he was got into the coach a little before three; declaring that, if he had been at home, nothing should have

have forced him from such company, and such wine, at so early an hour.

SIR George and his friend retired immediately after the Courtenays. He said little on his way to the Bank, and went to his apartment the instant he arrived there; for though his meditations were not of the pleasantest kind, he was impatient freely to indulge them. I see too plainly how it is, thought he: it is no longer possible for me to deceive myself. This loveliest, most amiable of women, has not a heart to bestow. Her partiality for Berkley seems apparent to every body, and a single ray of hope is denied to me. How is the failure of visionary happiness, which I had reared almost involuntarily, and which soared so high even this afternoon, dissolved into air!—Not even the fancied indulgence of complaint is left me. The very evening on which I first beheld her, her engagement was hinted to me; and to day how many things have occurred to confirm

confirm the certainty of it! And can I still weakly persist in hoping?—" Love will, indeed, hope, where reason must despair!" But what pretence have I for thinking of love? Ought I not to consider her as already the wife of another? No, unfortunate Brudenell, the charming, the inestimable Arabella is not *she* whom Providence has destined to soften thy cares, and smooth thy path through life; thou must search further for her who thou hopest will perform those endearing offices! But is there, then, is it possible that there should be *another* that can supplant her in thy affections? Can any one but herself cause such emotions in thy bosom as thou hast this evening experienced?— Can that angelic face, those eyes, which sparkle intelligence, those sweet accents, ever be banished from thy remembrance? He paused—Nay, she is more than all this; her soul is the exalted throne of virtue; she is all benevolence, all goodness.

Could

Could I but discover such a mind, though cloathed in a homely form, and be assured it was attached to me, I should account myself most happy.—O, Berkley! beyond the common lot of mortals is thy felicity! —Methinks I should be more resigned if thou wert more sensible of, more eminently deserving of the bliss that awaits thee. A longer pause succeeded.—I must hasten from this place. Perhaps, if I was wise, I should resolve never again to behold her: yet, now I have considered her situation and my own, and am determined to submit, with patience, to an evil so irremediable, why should I deny myself the delight of a few times more conversing with her? Many pleasures are not, I fear, in store for me; and why should I churlishly refuse myself one so exquisite, and so innocent? For my own sake, I shall avoid all particular conversation with Miss Dorville; and am determined to behold her in future as the property of another.

HAVIN

HAVING made this composition between inclination and reason, Sir George would fain have persuaded himself that he was more at ease. He acknowledged that his disappointment was great, at finding a woman, so every way what his heart panted after, entirely beyond his reach; but when he considered how very short his acquaintance with her had been, and how lightly he had always thought of sudden impressions, deemed it absurd to attribute the extreme restlessness, which never suffered him to close his eyes all night, to the influence of so young a passion.

MEANTIME the fair disturber of his rest was enjoying a delicious repose. Before she retired to her apartment, she had softly stolen to the side of Maria's bed; and perceiving that she was fast asleep, stood a few moments to admire the sweet serenity which was spread over a face too frequently clouded with discontent, or animated to a painful excess of pleasure or resentment:
then

then gently closing the curtains, she left her, ardently wishing that a time might arrive, when her mind would be as sweetly composed as her countenance then bespoke it. She was soon undrest; and had scarce dismissed her maid, and laid her head upon the pillow, before the interesting conversation she had enjoyed with Sir George occurred to her memory. She felt a glow of pleasure at the recollection of it, which might have been an enemy to repose, had not the fatigue she had undergone greatly assisted the efforts of the gentle Morpheus, who was dispatched, by his powerful master, to close her eyes; a commission which he had no sooner performed, than, delighted with the sweet, though inanimate, figure before him, he resolved to add his own favours to those of his principal, and waving his airy plumage thrice around her temples, she beholds Sir George sighing, supplicating at her feet. She stretches forth her hand to raise him; she bids him
live,

live, live for her. He is all extacy: he imprints a thousand kisses on that hand, and points to the temple of Hymen, whose ample doors stand open to receive them. She suffers herself to be conducted thither; she is united to the most amiable, the best of men. They are placed on a beautiful eminence, in the midst of a vast plain, filled with a multitude of people: they comfort the afflicted, they relieve the distressed, they communicate felicity to all! Happy, happy Arabella! can I be so cruel as to tear thee from blifs so extatic? Can I force thy imagination from this sweet heaven which it has formed, which it is so well fitted to enjoy, down to the fleeting pleasures, and real troubles, which, alas! all sojourners upon earth must share? I must, *I must*: amiable as thou art, the common lot of mortals *must* be thine! but I will promise thee one felicity, which will enable thee to encounter and overcome all the sorrows thou art liable to—that sweet
hope

hope which cheers and enlightens the most gloomy hours of the virtuous, shall be thy constant and delightful companion: the bright, the glorious reversion which thy good deeds are every day more firmly securing, shall render thy present existence comfortable, and thy future unutterably blessed.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



